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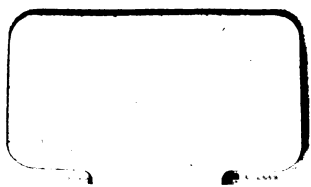
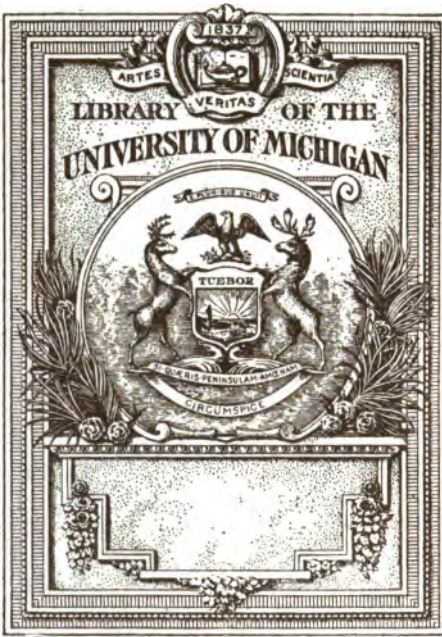
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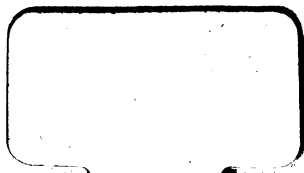
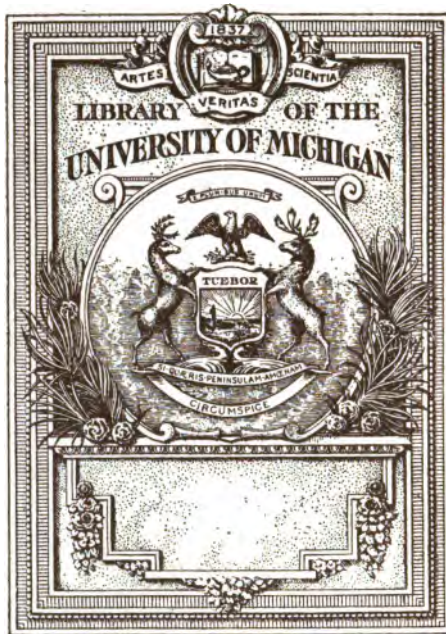
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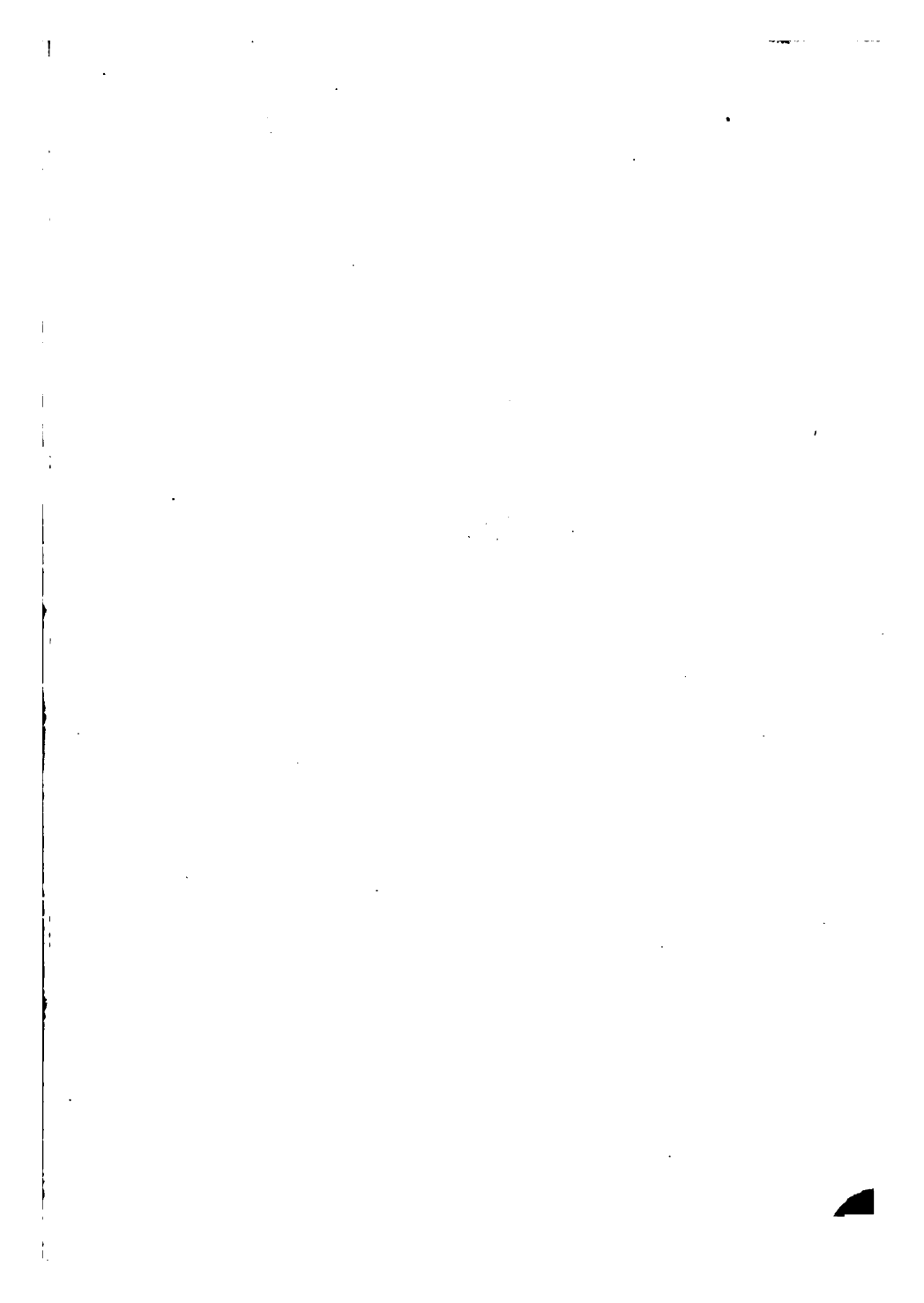
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SAMANTHA *VS.* JOSIAH







"HE WUZ SOON RACIN' THROUGH THE STREETS"

SAMANTHA vs. JOSIAH

BEING THE STORY OF
A BORROWED AUTOMOBILE AND
WHAT CAME OF IT

By

MARIETTA HOLLEY

Author of "Samantha at the World's Fair," "Samantha Among the Brethren," "Samantha in Europe," etc.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY
BART HALEY



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CHAPTER I

A Vision of the Unseen

JOSIAH and I had a talk about miraculous answers to prayer and visions and dreams. It wuz along towards night, and I'd got my work done up after havin' had a remarkable good supper. Josiah had enjoyed it to a uncommon degree, and accordin' to the onvaryin' law in such cases, the delicious food had mellered his sperit and made his demeanor as tender as the spring lamb we'd had for dinner.

He'd acted kinder touchy by spells all day, the worst spells comin' on jest before meals, when I wuz beginin' to cook 'em. I always make a practice of gittin' better things for Josiah to eat when he's worrisky and sometimes I think, in fact I most know, that he worries a purpose to set me to cookin' extra. But don't, for the land's sake, tell him I said so! I wouldn't have it known for a dollar bill that I thought my pardner wuz so onprincipled.

SAMANTHA VS. JOSIAH



"HE ACTED KINDER TOUCHY BY
SPELLS ALL DAY"



I'd had a dream the night before, about the middle of the night, and waked Josiah up to tell it to him. It madded him more'n considerable to be roused up out of his sleep, and he acted real pug-gicky at the time, and in the mornin', when I mentioned it to him agin, he wuz very fraxious and said:

He didn't give a dum for all the dreams

A VISION OF THE UNSEEN

that wuz ever hearn on, things never come to pass as you dremp 'em.

That wuz when he wuz buildin' the fire—it wuz a kinder cold mornin'. And so he'd kep' it up by spells all day. But now as the shades of evenin' wuz drawin' nigh and the last meal of the day wuz over and he knowed there wuz no use in prolongin' his methods, as we sot in our pleasant settin' room, he mendin' a plantin' bag and I knittin' a sock for him, he mellered down beautiful and said of his own accord:

“That wuz a wonderful dream of yourn last night, Samantha. I thought so at the time you told me, you see it affected me quite considerable, didn't you?”

And I sez dryly, “Yes, Josiah, I see it did.”

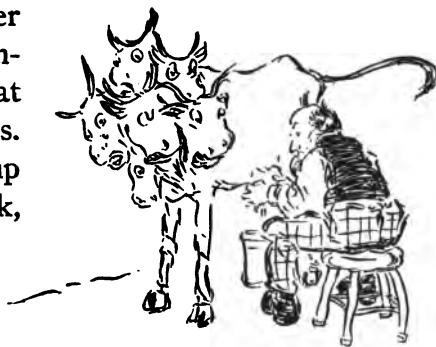
And he went on, “What queer things dreams be anyway, how onaccountable and strange, so sort o' vapory and thin, nothin' you can git holt of somehow.”

“No,” sez I, “you can't lay holt of the material dreams are made on and rub it between your thumb and finger and examine it. It is too delicate and illusive for our earthly grasp.”

“Yes,” sez he, “and dreams take us into

SAMANTHA VS. JOSIAH

such strange places and we see such strange things there. Folks say we always dream of what we've thought on durin' the day, but I know I never thought of own-in' a cow that had seven heads. And I drempt that last week,



"AND THERE I SOT MILKIN' HER"

and there I sot milkin' her and she a lookin' round at me with them fourteen eyes and kinder bellerin' at me."

"Yes, Josiah, I've drempt of many a seen I've never thought on through the day. It's a strange, weird country, Dreamland is, and strange companions walk up and down them misty valleys and shadowy mountain tops with us."

"I hearn of a man who, when he wanted to solve some deep problem his wakin' mind wuz unable to grasp, the last thing at night he

A VISION OF THE UNSEEN

would send out a Search Thought, like a scout, to foller the clue into Dreamland, to find the right answer and bring it to him. And the first thing when he waked up in the mornin' that Problem would stand up in his mind and right by its side would stand the Answer."

"Just how and where in them silent, misty solitudes of sleep the Thought grappled the Answer, collared it, and dragged it back into the land of Consciousness, I don't know, nor the man don't know that sent it out. But somewhere and somehow it wuz done. Queer, hain't it?"

And Josiah bein' very good natered (the softenin' influence of them light muffins and chops and delicious coffee bein' still present with him) sez, "Yes, it is queer, dog queer."

Sez I, "Such things show that there may be certain laws even in that strange Domain of Sleep if we dwellers in the alien clime of Wakefulness could comprehend 'em. And then agin dreams seem to be only light visions that come and go lightly, like the clouds that float over our head, as intangible and illusive as they are."

And mekhanically I glanced out of the west-

SAMANTHA VS. JOSIAH

ern window, framed in with sweet clusters of the prairie rose.

“Them clouds are thunder caps, Samantha, and I believe they’re bringin’ up rain.”

But I went on, regardless of his interruption, “Sometimes, Josiah, I believe dreams and visions are sent to us in the silence and darkness of night when our bodies are asleep and layin’ in God’s hands, are sent to give us warnin’s and tidin’s in some strange way we can’t quite comprehend.”

“Well, Id’no, Samantha, I hain’t quite made up my mind whether that is so, I hain’t quite settled it whether it is a fact or not. You know I’ve been busy with my spring’s work, and couldn’t tend to it, but Uncle Sime Bentley don’t believe in it at all, nor in mericles, nor answers to prayer. He sez that they are all in direct opposition to the Law. He said that while he wuz prayin’ for rain his wife would probable pray for a drouth ruther than resk spilin’ her bunnet, and so as he well said, the law would be broke up and crushed between them two petitions, they couldn’t both be answered, that wuz plain.”

Sez I, “If a baby had a valuable toy in his

A VISION OF THE UNSEEN

hand you'd gin it and you see he wanted to break it and still enjoy it, you'd probable control the child for his good. Behind the law must be the power that formed it. The maker must be mightier than the thing made, and able to control it at will. Devout prayer opens our own souls we know to the divine light, and how fur they control and influence other higher laws which we in our baby wisdom are ignorant of, I can't tell. But these are deep things, Josiah, and mebbly not for us fully to understand till the clay drops off that darkens our earthly vision. But some things I know, Josiah Allen, that I cannot explain."

"Yes, as Uncle Sime well said, wimmen can't explain things like us men, they hain't got the powerful logic and reasonin' powers that us men have, and they are naterally more inclined to believe the onreal, but us men, bein' fur wiser and stronger minded naterally believe in nothin' but the Real, what we can see and lay holt on and understand. And Uncle Sime don't believe much in any future at all; he thinks that when we die that is the last of us."

I shuddered at them dretful idees, but kep'

SAMANTHA VS. JOSIAH

right on, for I wuz growin' some eloquent. "Yes, as I say, Josiah, I can apprehend what I do not comprehend. I can't understand how our prayers, our winged hopes and aspirations, float up the golden way that leads from the secret citadel of the soul up to the throne of the Most High. I don't know, but I know it is so, and know that they reach the one that hears and answers."

"Well," sez Josiah, crossin' his leg and lettin' his darnin' needle filled with twine dangle down, "it wuz a powerful argument Uncle Sime put forth. Of course, as a perfessor and a deacon I opheld the idee of prayer, and answers to prayer. I patronized it a talkin' with him. I would anyway, jest for the looks on't. And you know, Samantha, I always have family prayers and pray in meetin' when asked to. But Uncle Sime's arguments wuz powerful, powerful."

"What wuz they, Josiah?"

"Well, I've told you one on 'em," sez Josiah, resoomin' his long stitches on his plantin' bag, "I've told you what he said about contrary prayers." And then he said, "We kneel down and pray and can't see who we're prayin' to."

A VISION OF THE UNSEEN

As he well said he couldn't and wouldn't believe what he didn't see with his own eyes. We wuz plantin' some posy seeds on his little Annie's grave, some seeds that Tom sent from Californy. He wanted me to help him because I am such a crackin' good hand at such work, and you know Uncle Sime jest worshiped little Annie, and it broke him all up to think he never should see her agin."

"Sweet little creeter!" sez I, "I don't wonder he wuz broke up if he thought that dreadful thing. But Josiah, them seeds looked dead and worthless when you put 'em in the ground, as dead as dear little Annie's body, but Uncle Sime expects that they will rise in a more glorious and beautiful form. I wonder if he thought on't."

"Yes, we talked about that, but Uncle Sime said, "If there wuz another life, which he doubted, there wuz no use thinkin' we should know our friends there, for with such countless multitudes and such infinite changes in the matter that composed the body, there wuz no use thinkin' they could ever be recognized; they would git all mixed up anyway."

"I wonder if he thought how them posy

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seeds planted side by side in the darkness would feel round in the cold clods of earth, grope round with their tiny rootlets to find jest the right materials to make one pink and the other blue. They won't make a mistake down there in the dark earth; they'll git jest the right answers to their desires. One wants to be blue, one white and another pink. And if you wuzn't so used to seein' it, you would think it wuz a hopeless and impossible thing for these tiny seeds to be put into such a big dark universe of earth to ever be hearn on agin. Much less to think that after their tiny bodies had decayed and mingled with the earth elements along with such countless multitudes of other seeds, they would each one rise up in its own body, but they do. And when Uncle Sime explains to me how that is done, I will explain how we are sown a natural body and raised a spiritual body, each one in its own order, and I will explain how we down here in our darkness feel upward for God and send our blind and gropin' aspirations toward the good, knowin' we will git the answer we need. Those tiny seeds never make a mistake, Josiah Allen, though I can't tell jest how it's done nor how

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our strong desires, our heart-felt yearnin's reach the fountain where desires are answered. How our awakened souls feel upward in the darkness, groupin' for the Infinite and grasp holt of comfort and light."

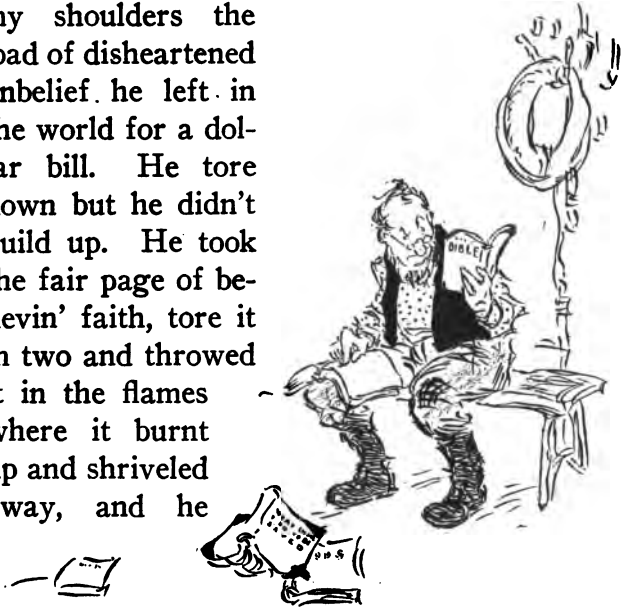
"Our strongest desire from the cradle to the grave is for immortality, and He who gives the South to reward the flight of the untutored northern bird over the pathless wastes of sky, He who keeps hidden in the north the great mystery of attraction that keeps the needle true to it through storm and stress, that rewards the tiny flower seed that wants to be blue and always lets it git the blue materials from the great mysterious storehouse of colors so deep hid that no one has ever discovered it—that Great Power isn't goin' to be good to poor little bird and blossom and pass by His own dear ones made in His own image and so near to Him that He calls 'em His children. He is not goin' to answer the hopes and desires of soulless things and mock and deride the prayers of His own beloved, and don't you go to believin' it, Josiah Allen, for if you do," sez I, sternly, "I'll know the reason why. Id'no," says I, lookin' keenly at him, "Id'no as I'd bet-

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ter let you go with Uncle Sime any more. I believe it's resky."

"Oh, shaw, Samantha, I am sound, sound as a sick-no-furder apple."

"Well, I hope so, but I feel dubersome about it. Uncle Sime owns all of Robert Ingersol's books, and pores over 'em, and tho Robert wuz a good natered creeter and a good pervider and smart as a whip, yet I wouldn't take on my shoulders the load of disheartened onbelief. he left in the world for a dollar bill. He tore down but he didn't build up. He took the fair page of believin' faith, tore it in two and threwed it in the flames where it burnt up and shriveled away, and he



"I'M SOUND, SOUND AS A SICK-NO-FURDER APPLE"

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didn't give nothin' back, only some epigrams and smart jokes, holler fruit filled with ashes that folks may eat and starve to death on. Uncle Sime loves them books and quotes from 'em all the time. Id'no." Sez I still more duberously, "I guess I won't let you go with him any more; 'tain't safe."

"Oh shaw! Samantha, I should think you had lived with me long enough to know I'm sound. But I do agree with Uncle Sime about settin' store by the Real, what I can see and grasp holt on. I don't believe in mirac'lous answers to prayer, there hain't no good horse sense in believin' it, as Uncle Sime sez—"

"Shet up!" sez I, "Don't you tell me another word that Uncle Sime sez."

"Well," sez he, lookin' conscience smut and some mortified, "as it were." He took a few very long stitches in his plantin' bag whilst I sot demute seamin' two and two, and worryin' dretfully about my pardner's idees which he had seemed to imbibe from evil communications. Anon he resoomed, for as I have often said, Injy rubber is no more elastic than men's mortifications, they spring back into complacency, oh, so easy.

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“You know, Samantha, as I said more formerly, we men hain’t so believin’ naterally as wimmen. Men’s minds bein’ made of stronger timber to use a strikin’ metafor, it hain’t so easy to bend ’em. You know you can twist a willer twig round your fingers, while you can’t bend a giant oak; even a woman’s mind can comprehend that: your’n can, Samantha.”

“Yes, Josiah, I feel that I can grapple with that idee.”

“Well, what follers logically? Us men bein’ so much stronger and wiser, feel that we’ve got no time to fool round with the onseen, and talk about miraculous doin’s, but have got to see things to believe ’em.”

“Tain’t no use to argy with you, Josiah, but what we know, we know, and I can tell you more than two dozen instances that prove, actually prove, beyond a doubt that a great over-rulin’ Power hears and answers prayer in what seems to be a miraculous way. Thomas Jefferson writ ’em down at the time I hearn ’em at my request in a big Scrap Book, I a headin’ each one with Bible verses writ in my own script, and I’m goin’ to read ’em to you, Josiah Allen, from time to time for your good.” And

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I thought to myself, mebby they'll offset Uncle Sime's deleterious influence.

"Every one of these incidents are absolutely true and happened to people I know and you know, and you would no more doubt their word than you would doubt the word of the Postles. And they fill me with joy, Josiah Allen; they lift me up and inspire me with hope and courage; they prove absolutely that there is another life, and they tell me no matter how dark the clouds are above our heads or dreary the way we're treadin' with tired, stumblin' feet, there is a kind Power above who sees all and who knows and pities us. One who, wiser than we are and knowin' better what we need for our truest good, will give us our hearts' desires if we trust Him and ask in faith believin', give 'em not mebby in the very way we expected, and at the very time we look for 'em, but in His own good way and time, fur better than ourn. These incidents I speak on—"

"Oh well," sez Josiah, gittin' up, "I hain't no time to hear 'em now, and I could probable explain every one on 'em, Samantha, in a good common sense way so even a female could understand 'em, and will when you read 'em, I

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will explain 'em all out to you one by one; it will be such a boon to you to understand 'em. But I hain't got no time now for I've got to go out and cover up that load of hay; them thunder caps, jest as I expected, are bringin' up a shower. You see I'm practical. I lay holt of facts that I can see and handle," sez he, takin' up his old hat and frock. "Us men with our solid practical minds keep the world rollin' on the good old Common Sense road. We lay holt of sunthin' we can see, the actual, whilst you dreamers and hoppers are like my two-year-old colt, always lookin' out for what you can't see, for what is useless and visionary, for the Onreal."

And I sez to myself, half mekaniically, "What is the Onreal?" Josiah didn't answer me, for he wuz pullin' his old hat down over his ears and buttonin' up his frock and sez: "I must hurry out and git this load of hay under cover or I shall lose money," but he turned at the door and sez, bein' determined, it seemed to have the last word, (but shaw, I didn't care. I don't much care about havin' the last word, though the most of the time I seem to git it).

"I foller the dictates of common sense and

A VISION OF THE UNSEEN

reason. I tackle the Real, what I can lay holt of and understand, and I mean to keep on at it." And he went out jauntily.

But after the door closed on the small departin' form, I sot demute for quite a spell and thought of a number of things.

I thought of that Mighty Power that ruled the world in the past, and is rulin' it to-day. The Great Unseen who hides Himself in the clouds and the silence, and speaks to the inner bein', rules the body by His sway over the soul.

I thought of the countless procession of saints and martyrs who had endured as seein' Him who is invisible, died in flames and torture with the glory of that invisible presence lightin' up their forwards.

I thought of the dreams and visions that ever since the world was new, had blessed prophet and apostle; of the voices out of the infinite silence that had been hearn by ears fitted to hear, whilst the dull ears of the multitude wuz deaf, and bein' deaf said there wuz no voices.

And the miraculous light that had shone on waitin' reverent souls from Mōses to St. John, whilst the blind multitude about said

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there wuz no light because they wuz too blind to see it. And I thought of the wonderful works of faith, that great onseen force, so impalpable you couldn't grasp it no more than the wind that blew where it listed, and yet wuz so mighty that it subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, was stronger than principalities or powers; things present or to come, more fur-reachin' than height or depth or any other creature. Blessed onseen influence movin' on down the centuries, sweepin' away like feathers the seen and what it called the solid, the real, and which with its twin sister, Love, gives to this life all that makes it worth livin'.

And I thought how our Lord had promised that in the latter days the young men should see visions and the young maidens should dream dreams, and after His miracles said, "Greater things than these shall ye do."

And most of all I meditated with a glad heart and a believin' one, how the Holy Book is full of instances of answers to prayer that men in their blindness call miraculous.

I sot for quite a spell meditatin' on this beautiful and inspirin' subject, bringin' up in my own mind all these instances I had spoke on

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to my pardner, provin' this beyond a doubt. I sot demute mebbly as Miss Moses did in her tent door after hearin' her pardner tell of the burnin' bush. Or Miss Abraham, after she hearn of the visit of the angels. Or the female relations or Saint Paul and Saint Peter and Saint John after they hearn of the heavenly inhabitants that had appeared to the relation on their own side.

And my mind comin' gradually down nigher onto the present, I sot and watched the dancin' light aginst the sombry clouds, and thought how whilst the mockin' world could see nothin' more than a blindin' flash or a threatened rain on new mown hay, annointed eyes had seen in a thing so ungraspable and evanescent as a flash of lightin', the promise of a world-changin' power.

Nations bound together, the soundless deep bridged, distance overcome, continents spanned, and a great world of light and warmth and help, the greatest wonder of the century. I thought of these and of all the marvels of these later days hid from the common vision, discovered by the chosen few, and as I thought of all this agin, I murmured dreamily to myself: "What is the Onreal?"

CHAPTER II

Josiah's Experience With an Automobile

THOMAS JEFFERSON has bought an ortomobeel and he and Maggie take the greatest comfort with it that ever wuz. You'll see 'em on most every fine day happy as king and queen, and sometimes the children on the back seat, flyin' along over the pleasant country roads. Why, it has made Thomas J. and Maggie over, they wuz both spindlin' when they bought it, and it has been better than a doctor for 'em. Thomas J.'s face looks ruddy and healthy as a farmer's, and Maggie has had to let out her dresses three times, and her bans.

Maggie sez nobody, onless it is a bird, can understand the uplifted, exhilarated feelin' of flyin' through the sweet air with nothin' between you and Happiness. She said that it seemed that you wuz in some way mistress of all the beauty that lay around you, and I've rid with 'em, and I know the feelin'; it seems somehow as if your wings wuz growin' and

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you owned the Earth. Nater spreadin' out her panorama before you on approval.

Sometimes it is a white farm-house nestlin' down in green orchards, with children playin' round the doorstep. Anon a clear brook flowin' through a green pasture with willers bendin' over it, and cows standin' knee deep in the cool water. Agin boundin' the blue horizon a high hill crowned with evergreens. Then peaceful, serene meadows, daisy-dappled and sun-gilded, and wide fields of grain the soft winds sweepin' into green waves. Then the deep green shade of maple woods with sun-checked shadows fur down the mossy aisles.

Anon you fly through sleepy little towns, with church spires pintin' upward and the store and tavern stoops tenanted by good-natered idlers, and children shoutin' at you as you fly on.

And a minute and you are glidin' over a stun bridge with a vista of sparklin' waters on each side, a brown old mill and a mill-dam spreadin' out like a pond with water lilies on it.

Then a handsome country house settin' back on its smooth green lawn and a flash of gorgeous color in its broad gardens. Then God's

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beautiful free country agin', and so on and so on, lovely pictures changin' every minute, with no dusty, sweaty horses between you to break the beauty spell and disturb your wrapped enjoyment with emotions of pity as you fly up the high hills and coast down 'em. Steam thrashers, road scrapers, traction engines and etcetery not loomin' up in your imagination like fearful giants, disputin' with you the road to Happiness. Sweepin' along like a bird on wings. Cleavin' the soft perfumed waves of ether that beat agin your happified linement. There is nothin' like it and won't be till we sail in air-ships through the blue sky up amongst the stars.

So Thomas Jefferson and Maggie sez, and so I say too, and to look at 'em and see what it had done for 'em nobody can dispute 'em.

And as Maggie sez, it brings fur-off places so nigh, it unites town and village, city and country. She sez they can take long trips now with perfect ease and enjoyment that they never thought of takin' before. "Why, mother," sez she, "you and father are only about ten minutes off now, and you used to be most an hour away."



"YOUNG!" SEZ HE, "WHAT DO YOU CALL ME?"

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"I know it," sez I, "and that's a great comfort, my dear, a great comfort."

Well, they hadn't had their car long when young Sam Blodgett got one, and he enjoyed hisen the best that ever wuz, and pretty soon Josiah got fairly crazy to buy one. I hung back from the idee, and when he brung up Thomas J.'s and Sam Blodgettses machines I sez, "They're both young men, Josiah, and able to run 'em."

"Young!" sez he, "what do you call me?"

I didn't answer, only by the glance I cast instinctively onto his bald head.

But he resented even that look and sez, "Many a young man is bald-headed; great thinkers have calculated it wuz the workin's of the intellect that het up the top of the head too much, and wore the hair off."

I didn't venter to dispute him, and he went on, "If there is anything I feel my intellect adapted to it is to run a orto. All you've got to do is to set up straight in front and turn that little wheel round and round."

Sez I, "There is sumthin' else to do besides turnin' that little wheel and you'll find out so."

"No, mom, that's about all there is of it,

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and you can zip along runnin' by Jonesvillians and skarin' 'em mebbly."

"Do you want to skair 'em, Josiah Allen?"

"Why, its stylish to; nothin' is more stylish than to flash and dash by a lot of folks and see 'em scatter out in the lot and you go on and leave 'em in mud and misery, their horses climin' trees and throwin' themselves, or prancin' and kickin', and you not mindin' 'em no more than as if they wuz flies a buzzin'."

Sez I, sternly, "Thomas Jefferson never duz that. He stops stun still whenever he sees a horse is skairt, and if a woman is drivin' he gits out and leads the horse by; he wouldn't hurt even a mouse, and never has."

"Well, it hain't stylish to act so; it is fur more genteel to scorch and dash past and pay no attention to 'em."

Sez I, "It is christlanlike and decent if it hain't stylish, and if shufflers would make a practice of doin' as Thomas J. duz, there wouldn't be so many accidents, and orto owners would be thought different on. Most all the accidents we hear on are caused by reckless racin' shufflers or intoxicated ones. Thomas J. sez that now the careful, courteous owners

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of ortos who are the big majority, have to suffer for the faults of the selfish few, who pay no attention to public safety or the rights of other people, who are criminally careless and dash on as if the hull highway belonged to them and other conveyances had no right to be. Thomas Jefferson is always careful and looks out for other folkse's safety as well as his own comfort; here as everywhere else he is a Christian gentleman, doin' as he would be done by; he ha'n't hurt anything with his orto, not a hen or a mouse."

"Well, I tell you agin it ha'n't genteel to act so, and any high-toned shuffler will tell you so. But that is neither here or there; the pint is, I'm goin' to git one."

I felt turrible, and didn't know what to do. But as usual Thomas J. come to the rescue. He and Maggie and the children wuz goin' on a orto tower up east to git the ocean air and see some of her relation, and he come to bid us good bye and I told him of his pa's determination to buy one, and he said:

"Sam Blodgett is goin' to California for a month to see his sick brother, and if father is determined on gittin' one, let him rent his; a

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month's trial will make him dead sick of it; it is too much work and care for father."

But I sez, "Your father will break it all to smash most likely."

"No," sez he, "it is well built; he won't do any harm that I can't ondo. I shall be back before Sam and will see to it."

So it wuz settled, Josiah contendin' he'd ruther buy one of his own, but consented to Thomas J.'s idee after a parley, though he sez: "I shan't rent, I shall borry; I can pay him back in time when I git mine home."

That dampened my feelin's, but Thomas J. sez, "Don't worry, father will git sick of it in a week's time; he will never have patience to run it long." So I settled down with what composure I could and see Josiah bring it home, he settin' up proud and hauty, his hand on the little wheel, actin' as if he wuz the hull power of the thing, crank, gasoline and all, and young Sam Blodgett settin' quiet and stiddy doin' the hull steerin' on't and makin' no fuss about it.

They run it into the carriage house, Josiah turnin' the hull caboodle of everything out to accomidate it; and from that hour begun my trials with Josiah Allen. Thomas J. had gone

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and I had nobody to lean on only Duty, and never did her apron-strings seem so unable to bear the strain I had to put on 'em. Josiah see my anxious forebodin' linement and sez:

"I thought you wuz jest carried away with ortos; you couldn't say enough in praise on 'em."

Sez I, "Josiah, I wuz, but to enjoy 'em you've got to have faith in your shuffler."

This speech wrung from my turrrible anxiety madded him so that he didn't speak to me in over three hours.

The next day I had my first hard shock. I had been invited to spend the day with a cousin on my own side, and when I got to the home station at night I thought I should faint away when I see the object that come to meet me at the train.

"What is it?" I sez wildly to myself, as the Thing approached, callin' me Samantha in a endearin' way; sez I, "is it a human critter or not?" It's eyes were covered with a enormous pair of goggles; it seemed to be draped in a huge leather apron with holes cut through for its arms. It didn't meet in front and wuz kinder laced back and forth like a cosset with

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bright red braid. It's pantaloons I thought I recognized, and it's hat; it was a tall white hat that had belonged to Josiah's father. He told me goin' home that he had hesitated between that and a fur cap that had fell onto him from the same pa, but considered the hat more becomin', white, he said, wuz younger lookin' and more dressy.

I left the goggles intact; they cost money, and could be swopped back for spectacles, but that leather apron costoom never see the light of another day, nor the hat; it is a mystery to Josiah to this day what become of 'em, but not to me! oh, no!

Well, after that he wore his second best pepper and salt costoom, sayin' it wuz more stylish for shufflers than black, and it wuzn't long before I had put two enormous patches on his shoulder blades, caused by his layin' under the orto. And his meetin' hat wuz split, for he would wear it. I tried to have him tie his bandanna on his head, for I knowed his bald head hadn't ort to come in contract with the cold earth. But he said that when you ketched him wearin' a handkerchief tied over his head whilst he wuz runnin' a orto, you'd ketch a

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weasel asleep. And he would wear his goggles. I told him nobody could see 'em down there, but he said somebody might happen to look under and he wouldn't be ketched without 'em for nothin'.

This conversation took place one day as we wuz approachin' Jonesville, when sunthin' had gin out, or he claimed it had. But it wuz in front of Brother Henzy's, and I mistrusted he went to contogglin' on it to show off how much he knowed about it's insides.

"*Run* a orto," sez I, "I should think you wuz a settin' or ruther a layin' it." He was flat on his back under it at that minute and he answered me from what seemed to be the bowels of the earth:

"Oh, I wouldn't miss layin' under my orto for nothin'; it is so stylish, everybody duz it. They lay under 'em for hours; it is very genteel."

And he continued his proddin' and scrapin' and greasin, I a settin' there in the middle of the road feelin' like a fool, and as many men and boys gathered round me and the orto as if we wuz lumps of sugar and they wuz flies in fly-time. I felt dretful meachin' at first, but I

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tried to remember all I'd read about the value of relaxation and the power of repose, and I tried to relax, and I breathed deep and wuz some helped by it. But to kinder stiddy myself and pass away the time, I got so I'd take my knittin' work along, and I knit Josiah two pair of socks a settin' in that orto in the middle of the road, and he under it, and two mittens.

Nothin' pleased him more than to have over the outlandish names of the machinery, especially before me and the brethren, showin' off I spoze, how much more he knowed than we did. Id'no as he got the names right, but we couldn't dispute him, but I mistrusted he complained of some of the things bein' out of gear jest for the pure pleasure he took in mentionin' the names on 'em and showin' off. I'd hear him to the telephone talkin' loud, seemin'ly wantin' everybody in Jonesville to hear him:

"My lights have gone back on me and my cylinder and my tire."

Then agin he'd shout, "There is sunthin' the matter with my nozzle, my muffler and my rocker, my splasher and my clutch seems to be all right and so duz my cam, my wrench, my inlet valve and my shank. But my crank hain't

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right nor my fly-wheel nor my drum, my exhaust valve seems to exhaust too much and my air-tube is loose."

I sez to myself, "I should think as much," and I spake out loud, "What makes you say *my orto, my tire*, and so forth?" Sez I. "Why don't you say *the cog wheels* are out of gear, the lights and the wrench and etcetery? What makes you say *my*, as if you owned the machine, when it is only a borryed one?" "Oh well, I might as well take the glory on't while I can and make 'em feel that I am somebody. I don't spoze the brethren know the name of a single thing in the orto's insides; it will probably impress the telephone company favorable."

Sez I, "They'll laugh at you. The telephone girl is Sam Blodgett's sister, and it will make you a laughin' stock."

"Well, she'll probable laugh out of the other side of her mouth before I git through with ortos; I am about to invent, Samantha, an attachment to 'em that will make us rich as Jews."

I shuddered instinctively, for I feared it wuz sunthin' endangerin' life and limb, but felt some better when he explained that it wuz an attachment to lay the dust, to be fixed on the

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outside some way; and I felt that though it might give him a drenchin', it would probable not kill him; he said he would make a preliminary trial with our old waterin' pot.

So he puttered half a day on't, and then he proudly rid out of the barn on it, I refusin' his overtours to be the first one to try his great discovery. But with the first revolution of the wheel, the waterin' pot (it wuz a enormous one, made for potato fields) emptied its entire contents on my pardner. Not a drop reached the dusty road, and he come in wet as a rat and covered with mortification like a mantilly.

But oh, how quick he recovered and got over it; his mind and sperit recooperated before his clothes got half dry, and he wuz soon racin' through the streets agin, usin' no discretion, blowin' his horn most all the time and makin' a specialty of runnin' by the brethren, they mad as hens at him.

He raced through Enos Shelmadine's cows, hittin' one on 'em so she didn't give milk on that side for days and days, and Enos charged Josiah for that half a bag of milk, and he had to pay high for it. He run over a hen and Josiah had to face the corse of that hen in court;

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it cost him 'over twenty shillin's besides lawyer's fees.

He skairt young Miss Jonas Bibbins into fits a meetin' her one dark night; she never see a orto; she wuz from Way Back, come to visit Miss Gowdey. She started to step over to Miss Henzy's, and when she met that roarin' monster with four big eyes glarin' fire at her, and snortin' at her, she thought it wuz a Evil Spirit right from Haydees, and fled before it, turnin' out jest in time to save her life, and fell into a conipation fit under a elder bush.

Josiah had the doctor to pay, and Jonas threatened whippin' him within a inch and a half of his life. Jonas wuz a big man, and I trembled for Josiah's safety and bones. But soon as she got out I invited 'em to dinner and supper and made of 'em.

The oncommon vittles I cooked cost money, but I recked not the expense or labor, so my heart's idol wuz saved. I urged him to send the orto back, but he skorfed at the idee, sayin' "he wuz havin' the time of his life."

"I should think as much," sez I, dryly.

"Why, Samantha," sez he, "when I git onto that machine and am flyin' along past the tow-

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ers of Jonesville, and hosses and mares and the brethren, I have a boyant riz-up, almost hilarious feelin' that I don't care a darn!"

Sez I, "Josiah, that hain't the right language for a pefessor nor the right sperit. Such a feelin' gin loose rain to has got folks into dangers and calamities time and agin."

His linement fairly shone with enjoyment, and I spake no more, for female pardners well know there is a time to advise and forebode aloud, and a time to refrain.

But a few mornin's after I wuz gittin' ready for meetin' and Josiah come in wropped in gloom and his old blue overhauls. He had been to work on that machine sence daybreak, Sabbath day, too. But he said it wuz the work of needecessity and had to be done. I felt turrible, and we had some words. But when he come in and sot down, oh so sad and deprested, I sez to him tenderly:

"What is the matter, Josiah?"

For a minute he didn't speak; he sot under a deep shadder of gloom, but anon I see the old sperit rousin' up on his linement of wantin' to show off, seemin'ly stronger than ever, and

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he sez in a important axent, tempered with sadness:

“My lubricator, my slot, and my steerin’ knuckle have all gone back on me. My flexible shaft cramps me too much; my clamps don’t clench on me; my gear don’t mesh; my shaft flops; my bushings hain’t right nor my sparker. My igniter jumps too fur into my cell; my fan don’t blow wind enough onto me; my worm gear crawls on me too much, and my lemp check don’t check me enough. My kam is out of gear; my sprocket; my swivel; my rocker and my fly-wheel. My gear shaft ketches onto my teeth; my crank case seems to rare up under my atomizer; my odometer and igniter won’t work, and my tire is busted on me.”

“For the land’s sake!” sez I. And then I went on in warnin’ axents and convincin’, “I believe you’ve dickered with it too much, Josiah. Thomas Jefferson don’t have any trouble with hisen, nor Levi Adsit, nor Sam Blodgett.”

“Throw them men into my face, will you? What if they don’t!”

Agin he sunk down into a melancholy silence, and I resoomed:

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"I believe you've laid under that machine and looked up into it through your goggles till the troubles look bigger to you than they be."

"Mebby so! my machinery did kinder swim on me towards the last. But 'tennyrate I can't make the darn thing stir a peg, and Id'no what's goin' to become on us."

"Why," sez I, "do as we did before; hitch the old mair to the surrey."

"I shan't drive no Sarah to meetin' to-day; I hain't comin' down to that before the brethren after runnin' my orto. But," sez he, brightenin' up, "speakin' of the mair has gin me a idee; I guess I can contoggle things up all right," and he started for the barn and pretty soon he come in and got ready for meetin'. And what do you spoze I see when I went out with my Bible and him-book in my hand? That man had hitched the old mair to that orto, and sez he:

"I've had bother enough with my engine; I'm goin' to drive my orto for the future with mair power; git in, Samantha."

Sez I, steppin' back, "when you ketch me ridin' in a orto with that patient old mair drawin' it, you'll know it."



"GIT IN, SAMANTHA"



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"I expected you'd oppose me," sez he, settin' down on a milkin' stool that stood handy. "Less reason together, Samantha. By drivin' a orto by mair power we combine fashion and safety; no danger of the mair explodin' or bustin' her tank, or crackin' her kam wheel, or missin' her sparker, or puncterin' her tire; though I may," sez he, makin' a feeble effort to joke, "I may, if she shows too much tire, puncture that tire with a gad. Fashion and safety combined, and ease of runnin'. What a lucky thing I thought on't."

"Well," sez I, "if you want to ride in any such fool way you can, but I never, never shall. Why wuzn't you contented," sez I, all beat out. "Thomas Jefferson wuz willin' to take us out in his orto two or three times a week, and he never had any trouble with hisen? And why wuzn't you contented with that and the mair? If you didn't feel able to hire a good shuffler?"

"Dum the shufflers!" sez he. "Ketch me be-in' ordered round and domineered over by one of them, actin' as if they owned the rig and the owners on't, and the earth and nobody else knew beans only jest them; you don't ketch me in that scrape, mom."

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“Well, then be satisfied with what you’ve got. Our son is a good driver, safe, modest; he don’t act as if the highway belonged to him alone and unassumin’ hosses and wagons wuz trespassin’ on the sacred rights of ortos; he believes in equal rights for both, hosses and ortos. He don’t act much like some orto owners and drivers, lookin’ ahead through their goggles at some distant gole and drivin’ towards it like fury, racin’ and runnin’ over anything and everything in their way and payin’ no attention, and carin’ for nothin’ dead or alive. Most all the axidents we hear on is caused by them reckless, heartless shufflers. And I believe whiskey is at the bottom of lots of ’em.”

“Oh, bring whiskey up at such a time as this,” sez he, gittin’ up. “The question is, Are you willin’ to be driv’ by mair power?”

“Yes,” sez I, “in the surrey.” And sez I, agin, “Bring that surrey out and hitch that mair onto it.”

“Dum Sarah!” sez he, gittin’ up. “I told you I wuzn’t goin’ to meetin’ to-day with Sarah before the brethren and sistern, and that’s settled!”

I didn’t argy no furdur, but histed my um-

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brell and sot off towards Jonesville walkin' afoot, and I hadn't got only jest beyond Deacon Henzy's when he overtook me with the old mair and surrey, and we went to meetin' in peace.

I spozed mebbly my trials wuz over with him, but to my dismay he got up the next mornin' at daybreak and spent most of the hull day to the barn, neglectin' his work and actin'. But about the middle of the afternoon he come in with a radiant linement and sez: "She is workin' all right now and I am ready to take you, Samantha, anywhere you wish to go within a radium of one hundred milds."

Sez I, "Don't! don't resk your life in that orto, Josiah, to-day."

But he sez, "I'm goin' to take a pleasure ride in my orto, Samantha, and I want you to go with me and enjoy it."

"Enjoy!" sez I, in a cold axent as irony as my cook stove. And agin I sez, "Don't run the resk, Josiah. And I couldn't go anyway for I have important work at home."

He argyed warm, but when he found out my work wuz fine cookin', he said it wuz probable best for me to stay home. So he sot off alone,

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I worryin' awful but knowin' that nothin' less than tyin' him up could keep him back, and I hated to do that; it wuz so detrimental to his dignity. But I foreboded awfully and stood the biggest heft of the time out on the west porch with my hand over my eyes gazin' down the road where my idol had disappeared in a cloud of dust.

And alas! my worst forebodin's wuz realized; Josiah, as nigh as I could make out, had a fine time blowin' his horn and racin' by everybody and seein' 'em scatter before him. I guess he got so high-headed that he thought he owned the highway, and the towns of Jonesville and Zoar.

But when he got most to Jonesville he met Simon Slimpsey and Betsy with their old washboard sided horse hitched to their ancient wobbly surrey. Josiah had always looked down on the rig, even from our old Democrat; now you can imagine how fur he looked on it from a orto.

And when he see 'em standin' stun still in the middle of the road after he had been scatterin' folks right and left like leaves before a cyclone, to see 'em not turnin' out a inch for

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him, it madded him; for he thought they did it to be mean and dare him. But it wuzn't so. Simon wuz skairt most to death. He's dretful old and has lost his faculty, and he dassent move, and Betsy wuz also stunted with fear. Josiah yelled at 'em:

"Git out of the road with your crazy old Sarah, or I'll let my orto loose onto you!"

They didn't move a peg; Josiah tooted his ear-piercin' horn till the surroundin' air fairly trembled. And the old horse stood up on its feeble old hind legs. But Simon never moved a mussel and Josiah stood up in the orto and yelled out:

"Don't you dast me! I won't take a dast from you, you old fool you! I'll ride through you with my orto in another minute!"

He didn't mean to, but the orto wuzn't right to start with and sunthin' gin way in its insides and his hash and rash words come true. He did ride through 'em, and in another minute they wuz all mixed up together in a deep rut in the road, Josiah havin' held the orto in while he wuz talkin' to 'em saved 'em, I spoze, from all goin' to everlastin' smash.

They all survived the wreck but the horse,

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that meekly whinnered and gin up the ghost. It wuz willin' to go, and prepared; it's bones couldn't showed no plainer without comin'



"JOSIAH STOOD UP IN THE ORTO AND YELLED OUT"

through the skin (but if you'll believe it, Josiah had to pay for them bones, and pay high).

But to resoom backwards. Simon lay stunned; Betsy's front frizzles had slipped down till they wuz seperated from her bunnet by a broad strip of forward. Her bunnet wuz all

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stove in and smashed, and she wuz throwed in such a way she managed to sort o' fall into Josiah's arms; she wuz always partial to him. And he stormed and acted; he despises the very ground she walks on. But she clung to him; she always wuz a clinger, and all Jonesville seemingly lookin' on added to his mortification.

Finally, with a enormous effort he throwed her arms off, her eyes lookin' reproachfully at him through her false hair, for it wuz down over her eyes and nose by this time, and she sez: "Oh, don't be so cold to me!"

He flung her off in a frenzied way, riz up, or tried to, but found his legs wuz twisted under him and a deep crick wuz runnin' through his back. His goggles wuz broke, one eye wuz driv some distance into his left cheek, the other eye wuz found on Betsy's pink tarlton fishu, where she seemed to wear it like a breast pin. This triflin' contrarytemps made the crowd jeer louder than ever. As Josiah went down they say he called my name wildly, but soon he wuz seemin'ly beyend all feelin' on that or any other subject. He sunk back, crying out in a loud voice, "Dum it all!" And

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then went into a sort of swoon or spazzum, havin' his senses all the while and sufferin' turrible both in his physical nater and his mental and abnormal.

They wrenched a door offen Si Crandall's hen-house, laid it acrost his buck-board that stood handy and the doctors and barriers accompanyin' him, they bore him home to me like a warrior on his beer.

And oh what feelin's I felt as they bore him into my ghastly presence! I wrung my hands in turrible agony and waved 'em towards the bedroom door, whither they carried him. Then I sunk down into my rockin'-chair speechless and mournin' out, "Oh, don't tell me my Josiah is no more!"

Doctor Bombus assured me that the breath of life wuz still inside of him. And soon, as I hung over him, I hearn the glad and welcome sound of his voice callin' Simon all to nort, and the orto and Betsy, and the Sarah, and me for not goin' with him, and the horse and Jonesville at large.

Oh, how passin' sweet that contumely sounded in my ears, for I knowed he wuz yet alive, and himself. But he went down to Dan-

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ger's very doorstep and lay on it for some time, and while there Thomas J. fixed up the orto and sent it back as good as new.

Simon after a little got back what few senses he had, and Betsy revived so's to send a owed to the next week's *Gimlet*. There wuz twenty verses, but I won't put down but three on 'em.

Betsy's poem wuz headed by a few impressive words from the Editor of the *Auger*. (The Editor of the *Gimlet* has bought a second-hand machine and the *Auger* is down on 'em.) He said in part:

"Our fair contributor in this touchin' and eloquent poem has filled a long felt and bitterly needed want. It is indeed time for the *Auger*, for Jonesville and the surroundin' and adjacent world to rise up and arm himself and herself and demand that orto cars, if they have a right to move at all, which I much doubt, shall be made and compelled to go through back lots and swamps.

"Shall our sacred privileges as men and horses be imperilled? Shall we be dastards enough to submit to the ignominy of not feelin' safe in racin' horses and bein' raced, through the streets as we have heretofore enjoyed the

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privilege of? Shall our harmless droves of male and female cows peacefully pasturing on the public highway, or slumbering sweetly on the same, be roused up and disturbed by these fiendish, snorting interlopers?

“Shall we calmly look on and see the inalienable rights of our gentle hens trompled on and down-trod? Shall hen dairys be forbid from flocking into and covering the highway where their parents’ feet, or ruther claws, have for ages trod without being ruthlessly frightened and scattered by the deafening tootings of on-hallowed horns?

“And what comes nighest to the heart of male and female, shall our playful little children be debarred from their innocent mirth in trying to run before a rig to see how nigh they can go without being hit? No, that sweet and familiar privilege of our darlings shall not be curtailed without a bitter struggle. Stone them, you innocent cherubs! Smash the insolent machines and their guilty occupants! You have powerful influence behind you!

“To arms, ye Jonesvillians! and adjacent worldlings—to arms! Rise you and exterminate orto cars from the face of the earth and

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the outraged orbs and ears of the denizens of the same.

“With these few mild remarks, fur, fur too weak to paint the seethin, tumult ragin’ in my breasts, I will introduce the readers of the valued *Auger* (one dollar a year in advance) to this strong noble poem:

OWED TO A ORTO CAR

BY MRS. BETSY BOBBETT SLIMPSEY

Oh who would own a orto car
Oh who would pass their life in skair
Who could amass a living mair,
Or horse or mule or ox or cow
On which to ride with peaceful brow,
Acrost the country's lovely side
Or by the creek bank gently glide.

And oh what arrer in my heart
That he who once did aim Love's dart
At me should be the primal curse
To kill my wan, my peaceful horse,
My Simon stunt and me to fling
Hither and yon with drooping wing
And broken brim and jammed-in crown
A mock, a jeer to Jonesville town;
And hear him cry, "Samantha dear"
And fly to her and leave me here.

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Oh orto cars! I thee despise
Thou art a horrow in mine eyes
I hate thee driv by haity men
A scarin' dog and gentle hen,
And male and female Heaven hath made.
I hate the lots and dooryards vast
Where mortals flee when thou dost pass.
I hate the trees our steeds doth try
To climb with frenzied rollin' eye.
I lothe thy breath so stinkin' strong,
I lothe thy skornful tootin' horn,
That snorts and leaves us all forlorn
Leaves us with overbearin' spurt
Fur, fur behind eatin' thy dirt.

But Josiah didn't rally; he run almost clear down and Doctor Bombus wuz baffled. He recommended cheerful society and soothin' tablets.

And I sez, "I've been so cheerful that it has most wore me out, and I've ordered Ury and Philury to laugh out loud every chance they got, and it ended by his callin' 'em tarnal fools, and orderin' 'em out of the room; and as for soothin'," sez I, "I've always got more help from that Scrap Book than from fetty or catnip."

Doctor Bombus knew about that wonderful

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Scrap Book; I had showed it to him and he sez:

"I highly approve this hygenic procedure; continue elucidatin' to his weakened comprehension every available opportunity these miraclous and transcendental occurrences."

"But," sez I, "though he seems to be soothed by 'em, he disputes every one on 'em root and branch, argys on 'em and gits his blood all het up over 'em."

"An exceedingly advantageous hypothesis, this mental antagonism directs morbid attention from peculiar physical discomfiture. It excites other emotions, saving friction in those already retrograding and assaulting his cranium."

I felt dretful mixed up and kinder dazed, but I sez mekannically: "I'll read 'em to him."

"Yes, encourage by all means his constitutional tendency to take divergent and as you may say opposite views of any subject you elaborate."

"Oh," sez I, "he don't need encouragement in that; he wuz always bound to argy and sot in his own way."

"At this momentous juncture I strongly advise continuity in similar procedure. It has,

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as I formerly remarked, a tendency to direct the sanguinary current, now unduly distending one portion of his cranium to another large space comparatively untenanted."

It sounded as if he thought there wuz vast empty chambers in my pardner's head, but I didn't argy with him. I sez, "I had made up my mind to read 'em to him, but I never mistrusted before it wuz good for Josiah to dispute 'em and act."

Sez Doctor Bombus, takin' up his saddlebags and goin' towards the door, "Medical science is makin' such enormous strides it cannot be expected that those unversed in medical lore can grasp its gigantic problems.

"I assure you my diagnosis is correct and advantageous results will accrue from following strictly my prescription."

As he closed the door I sez to myself, "I should think it wuz my own prescription instead of hisen," but I laid out to foller it all the same. And one duz feel safer in follerin' medical advice, even if you've made up your own mind to it before askin' it.

As for Josiah, he hollered out to know "if that old fool hadn't gone, and if I laid out to

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stay in the hall all day and leave him to die alone." He wuz dretful worrisome; it beat all. But I hastened to carry him his dinner, he declarin' that he couldn't eat a mouthful. And he didn't eat only four slices of toast, a big bowl of broth, some chicken and jelly and things.

I then got out that invaluable Scrap Book and read two incidents to him true as Gospel, writ down by Thomas Jefferson, headed by Bible verses in my own script. And Josiah sot up in the end of the bed and disputed each one on 'em jest as nateral, and I believe it did him more good than vittles or tablets.

CHAPTER III

"Somebody Told Her"

"And they shall be ministering spirits to such as shall be heirs to salvation."

"Seeing that we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses."

THE wife of a clergyman, a very spiritual woman, told this incident, which took place in her earlier life and strongly affected and influenced her ever afterward. Her mother was a very pure and high-minded woman, and between her and this daughter, whom we will call Mrs. A., there were the ties of congeniality and spiritual comradeship, added to the most fervent motherly and daughterly attachment.

When this sweet mother died the daughter was well nigh broken-hearted, and the longing to see her mother, or hear her voice again, took possession of her. So much so that during a severe illness of her mother's sister, which occurred whilst she was visiting her, a sister to whom her mother had been greatly attached, she said to herself:

“SOMEBODY TOLD HER”

As much as I love Aunt Mary, I almost wish that she could pass into the other world while I am here, for I know that the Lord would send no other angel but my mother to bear dear Aunt Mary's spirit home, and I would know that my mother was near me if I could not see her.

But the dear aunt recovered her health and the years rolled by; time had brought many changes to Mrs. A., and her life was a full and busy one, passed in many countries. Time had passed away and borne with it all remembrance of the half formed wish at her aunt's bedside. She was dwelling with her husband now in a large city, both hard workers in the Church of Christ. She was alone in her parlor one day, lying on a couch reading. Suddenly as she read she felt a soft fanning on her face, as if it might be the waving of wings above her. And a voice reached her, not through the usual avenues of speech, but it made itself clear to her inmost soul. She knew the voice.

“You have wanted to see your mother; she is here with you.”

She sprang up, the book dropped to the floor,

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and she cried: "Mother! Mother! Where are you?"

And as she stood trembling, she felt the presence of a great multitude—"The great cloud of witnesses."

So vivid was this impression that she put up her hands as if she were pressing her way through a great crowd, an innumerable host. Hardly knowing what she did she reached the door, and as she opened it a lady stood there, just coming in. She said to Mrs. A.: "You are ill."

"I don't know."

"I will go away and come again."

Mrs. A. hardly noticed her going. She went into her husband's study and threw herself onto his couch, and when he returned a few hours later with a telegram, he found her there, weeping. She looked up and said: "Aunt is dead."

He thought she must have received some message like the one he held, and he said:

"I wouldn't mourn, dear. Aunt Mary was ready; she was glad to go."

But Mrs. A. said: "I am not crying because Aunt is dead, but because I am not a better

“SOMEBODY TOLD HER”

woman. Mother has been here; I have heard her voice, and if I had been a little better woman I could have seen her face.”

The faithful old colored servant, who had admitted the visitor, knew just the hour she came. Mrs. A.'s aunt died at just that time, so the telegram stated.

My scheme and Doctor Bombuses wuz successful long before I'd finished readin'. The cast-down and wan look on Josiah's linement had passed away like a tale that is told, and he commenced to argy jest as fresh and chipper as if ortos and Betsy Slimpseys had never been.

Sez Josiah, “I believe somebody brought that news to her on the sly; mebbly it wuz that woman that come in; wimmen are as sly as the old Harry; they love to do things secret and onbeknown.”

“It wuz before she got there.”

“Well, it might have been somebody out in the street that hollered it up to her.”

“How did they know it? Perfect strangers.”

“Oh, news will git out; it travels fast. News will always git there. And as for that buzzin’

SAMANTHA VS. JOSIAH



"WIMMEN ARE AS SLY AS THE OLD HARRY"

she hearn over her head, I believe it wuz muskeeters."

Sez I, "Josiah Allen, I am goin' now to use a word that I don't approve on—I'm goin' to say, oh shaw!" and I said it:

"Oh shaw!"

He wuz impressed; he knows I don't use that word lightly.

"But," sez he, "If she didn't git the news in some such way, how under the sun could she got holt on't? Hain't there certain laws

“SOMEBODY TOLD HER”

laid down that are sure and onmovable, and hain't these idees you are promulgatin' agin Nater?"

Sez I, "Laws had to be made or else they wouldn't be, and hain't the maker above the made? Can't the one that made the laws change 'em or make new ones? What is Nater but God's servant? The one who made her can control her most likely. And what do you and I know, Josiah Allen, about the mysterious space about us, full of onknown things and the laws that govern 'em? What do we know of the mysteries of God? What do we know of the subtle links that connect mind and matter, soul and sperit? Fur beyend our eyesight stretches the rays of light our unaided vision is too dim to see. Fur beyend our natural human senses stretch the gold links of spiritual and divine laws, too fine and pure for our gross comprehension. They press about us on every side; they swing their viewless links down about us. Their ethereal tissues twine about our earthly senses as the mist lays agin the onheedn' sides of the mountains. Sometimes a rift breaks through the coarser cloud of human comprehension and

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a ray of the divine breaks through. A fleeting apprehension reveals what comprehension fails to make known."

"'The pure in heart shall see God,' and some pure souls not yet quite pure enough to see Him in His glory, are yet near enough so they can catch at times some of the ineffable rays of light and comfort that flow from His presence."

Sez Josiah, "I believe it wuz the old nigger woman that told her."

And I jest walked out of the room with my head pretty well up, so hurt wuz I and so jarred by bein' hauled down so sudden from the mount of eloquence on which I wuz standin', to the low, monotonous, sandy sile of Jonesville, and the oncongenial idees of Jonesvillians.

It jars anybody to be brung down so voylent that it is fairly dangerous. And your emotions, eloquent soarin' feelin's can be knocked down jest as easily as your bodily frame, and easier, too; and it hurts worse. Emotions, specially soarin' ones, such as mine wuz, are fur more sensitive than bones.

But I hain't more'n got out of the settin' room before I sensed and recollected: What

“SOMEBODY TOLD HER”

am I a doin’? When I undertook to read these incidents for Josiah’s good and wuz to encourage his argyin’ on ’em, I sez to myself, “Samantha, you must not give way to your



AND I JEST WALKED OUT —

feelin’s; you must go back and read ’em to him,” and I did, and he disputed jest as nateral and seemed to take solid comfort in it.

CHAPTER IV

The Miraculous Message

*"From visions of the night when deep sleep
falleth upon men"*

*"I will come to visions and revelations of
the Lord."*

A LOVELY Christian lady, dwelling in a large eastern city, well beloved for her many charities, her musical talents, and her wide hospitality, relates the following:

She was the daughter of a woman so famed for her goodness and personal holiness that at her death, which had taken place some years before, many funeral eulogies were pronounced upon her, both in this country and in Europe.

After her mother's death her father, who deeply mourned the loss of his beloved wife, had lived with her.

This lady, whom we will call Mrs. R., was just on the eve of going to Europe to spend the summer months with her son and daughter. And the evening before her departure she went into her beautiful music room and

THE MIRACULOUS MESSAGE

played to her father upon the church organ and sang to him the sweet old hymns she loved so well, many of them her own compositions.

And as her father listened, the tears ran down his cheeks, and he said softly, as if to himself: "Oh dear Ma! dear Ma!"

These old hymns bringing so vividly to his mind memories of the beloved wife who had loved and sung these hymns with him so many times.

The next morning Mrs. R. started on her trip, leaving her father in his usual health. She was having a pleasant time, had enjoyed a prosperous voyage across the ocean, and was journeying leisurely from city to city, taking all the time she wished to satisfy her own craving for foreign sights, as well as the young eyes and eager minds of her children. Almost every steamer brought her good accounts from home, which, of course, added greatly to her enjoyment.

Several months had passed swiftly, as it will in constant change and pleasurable excitement. And one evening found them in an Italian city. She had had a hard day of sight-seeing, and thought she would retire early to

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rest and fit herself for another day of foreign wandering.

She had been asleep for some time when she had a dream, or a vision, for it seemed too vivid and real for a dream.

She thought her father and mother had met. The wedded lovers, so long parted by the deep gulf of death, were reunited.

And the bliss that filled their souls at their reunion seemed in some strange way to be communicated to her, their well beloved daughter. Her soul was filled with rapture, the very ecstasy of bliss, and the overwhelming tide of joy that swept through her at their meeting, woke her.

She sprang out of bed and walked up and down her room, trembling with excitement, and said to herself, "I shall not sleep any more to-night." As she did so she glanced at her watch; it was just eleven.

The next morning she sat down and wrote to her sister an account of her vision and the time it had taken place, and asked if all was well with her father.

This sister, Mrs. S., had lost a dearly loved daughter under peculiarly heart-breaking cir-

THE MIRACULOUS MESSAGE

cumstances. The loss had almost broken her heart, and in her wild grief she had rebelled against the hand that had smitten her. She had felt that she could no longer love the One that had taken her daughter from her so suddenly, so unexpectedly.

She had refused to go to church and had almost renounced her belief in God. At all events she felt that a loving father would not bereave her as He had done. If there was a God at all she believed He was a great Powerful Force that ruled this world relentlessly, uncaring for human love and sorrow.

But when she received this letter all her old love and faith rushed back in a flood, tears of mingled gratitude and wonder flowed from her eyes, melting forever the icy coldness and unbelief.

Her father had died at just the hour of her sister's vision, allowing for the difference in time in Italy and here. And God had carried the news to her sister. Not the news that her dearly loved father had died, and she could never behold his kind face again, nor hear the loving voice. No, but tender, lovingly he had conveyed the tidings to her that her father and

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mother had met, and had given her a blessed foretaste of the bliss of that reunion.

Mrs. S. felt that this was a God she could love and trust. And if he had taken her daughter from her it was for some wise purpose, perhaps as a mother keeps some valuable toy from her child for a time for fear it will be harmed by its surroundings, keeps it safe from all danger, to be given back uninjured in the future; it was for some good reason that she felt that she could trust Him to make known to her.

She took the letter to Mrs. R.'s husband. He had been afraid to shock his wife by sending a telegram. But he had written to his son, telling him to break the news very gently to his mother.

Through some mistake this letter had not directly reached them. But Mr. R. said as the Lord Himself had prepared her for the news, he would send her a telegram.

Sez Josiah, "I'll bet somebody at that hotel had hearn the news of her Pa's death and jest hollered it to her through the keyhole."

"It wuz not spoken aloud; it wuz spoken to her soul."

THE MIRACULOUS MESSAGE

"How do you know how to speak to the soul? I'll bet a dollar bill you can't tell where the soul is; I'll bet you couldn't lay your finger on it within half an inch."

Sez I in a rebukin' axent, "You won't ketch me bettin' on such a solemn subject, Josiah Allen."

"Id'no as it is a solemn subject. I presoom you think it is because you're ignorant on't. Wimmen naterally hate a subject they can't handle and talk glib about."

"You speak, Josiah," sez I, "as if you wuz sure you knew."

"I do; I can locate it within a hair's breadth."

"Well, where is it?"

"Right here," sez he, smitin' himself in his stomach. "Right here in the asolier plexious. That is the seat of the soul." And agin he looked wise and smote himself hard in the stomach. "It makes you feel kinder meachin', Samantha, don't it, to not know where the soul lays?"

"No, Josiah," sez I, "I hain't lived with a man for so many years as I have with you, without understandin' that his stomach ruled to a alarmin' extent his moral qualities, his

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amiability and his will. Hain't I lived up to that belief and held it up to wimmen as the first commandment with promise of gittin' along with a man, to cook oncommon good



THE SCHOOLMASTER EXPLAININ' IT

vittles for him? But how come you to be so knowin' about it, Josiah?"

"Oh, I hearn the schoolmaster explainin' it all out the other night. He said our souls wuz that little nerve center filled with gray matter that lays back here," and agin he struck himself on the stomach. "He said it wuz about as big as a butterfly."

THE MIRACULOUS MESSAGE

"Some on'em may be, Josiah, but some folks'es souls don't seem to me to be much bigger than a muskeeter."

"Well, he said butterfly. And a man naterally knows better than a woman, and I shall always size it up by a butterfly. And he said deep breathin' wuz what we needed to wake it up and set it to goin."

"It needs more than deep breathin', Josiah Allen; it needs deep thinkin' and good actin' and aspiration and prayer to enlarge the soul, expand its wings and make it bring the body under its control."

"Well, you may do as you're a minter, Samantha; I shall foller his rules, and I have for days." And he stood up and took some mighty breaths.

"That's how you broke your suspenders, Josiah; I wondered how you did it two days runnin', and you sick abed most of the time."

"Well, what of it! what is a few buttons compared to havin' a big soul?"

And agin he leaned back and inhaled powerfully.

"Deep breathin' is good, Josiah. I believe it, and I don't begrech the work it makes me

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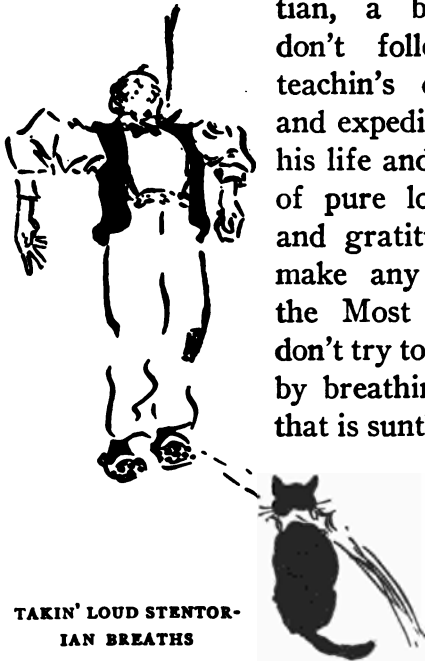
to have you foller it up; but I can't bear to see you trust too much to it."

But Josiah kep' right on not mindin' my forebodin's. The schoolmaster said he wuz practicin' it day and night. He seemed real anxious about his soul."

"Yes," sez I, "as it has been well said, 'The smaller a man's soul is the more anxious he is to save it, and do it himself.' A real Chris-

tian, a big-souled man, don't foller the Lord's teachin's out of caution and expediency. He gives his life and his service out of pure love and loyalty and gratitude. He don't make any bargains with the Most High, and he don't try to git into Heaven by breathin' deep, though that is sunthin' I highly ap-

prove on," I agin assured him. "But to enlarge and inspire the soul you may



TAKIN' LOUD STENTOR-
IAN BREATHS

THE MIRACULOUS MESSAGE

depend on't, it takes more than wind, and you'll find it out so."

But Josiah didn't pay no attention to my words. He had got up and stood now in the open doorway and wuz takin' such loud stentorian breaths that I instinctively threaded my needle with stout thread and picked out a new suspender button.

CHAPTER V

Josiah and Samantha Attend Two Weddings

JOSIAH and I wuz invited to Mary Smith's and Ethelinda Allen's weddin's. It happened queer as a dog that both of these weddin's wuz goin' to take placè on ensuin' days, the sixth and seventh days of October.

The girls wuz nieces of mine and Josiah's. It is needless to say that Ethelinda Allen wuz his niece, and she wuz the one to be married first; she always did like to take the lead, and her Ma liked to have her. These girls wuz brought up different, their Mas bein' no nigher alike than night and day. I never liked the way Amanda Allen brung up her girl; she believed in ornamentin' the outside of the platter and her girl's mind, and not payin' any attention to the inside—the heart and soul education.

The last time I'd seen 'em they had come on a visit to me a year before, and my niece, Mary Smith, and her Ma wuz visitin' me at the same time, so the forces on both sides, as you may say—Josiah's and mine—met on the field.

AT TWO WEDDINGS

Mary Jane Smith brung up her girl fur different from Ethelinda. She paid attention to the inside of the platter; Mary wuz learnt first the beauty and necessity of truthfulness and goodness, and on that structure wuz erected as good a book education as they could afford.

Why, it wuz a sight to see them two girls together, and see how different they looked and acted; Ethelinda affected and genteel, preenin' and primpin' and actin', and Mary gentle and honest and sincere. And whilst Ethelinda's face wuz painted, as any one could see, and her hair piled up and ringleted on the top of her head, and her dress all hangin' and dribblin' with ribbin ends and bows, and artificial flowers and cheap jewelry, Mary's pretty face wuz clean and wholesome, and her wavy golden hair brushed back and fastened with a silver comb, a few pretty little curls hangin' down on her white forehead, and her dress wuz a pretty blue lawn, made baby waist and elbow sleeves, and a little real lace trimmin' the neck and sleeves, and a fresh little bunch of flowers in her belt.

Well, their hull *toot ensembly* (French) had jest that difference, and it extended even to

SAMANTHA V/S. JOSIAH

their lovers. There had been two young men payin' attention to 'em for some time; one wuz a clerk in a grocery store and the other wuz a good, plain carpenter. Both of these young men come to our house and spent a Sunday while the girls wuz there, and I favored Ralph West, the young carpenter, from the first on't. I had hearn he had been kinder took with Ethelinda's dashin' beauty at first, but had soon transferred his attentions to Mary. The clerk, Lancelot Tubbs, wuz engaged to Ethelinda. And what wuz queer, young Tubbs had at first paid attention to Mary, but he wuz too showy to suit her taste, but jest suited Ethelinda and her Ma.

He had his hair oiled heavy and parted in the middle and combed smooth on each side; his little black mustash wuz also made shiny with pomatum and drawed out to a p'int on each side; his clothes wuz cheap black, showy goods, made up dretful stylish, but wuz crumply and creasy, as cheap goods will git. He wore sights of flashy jewelry, and his high collar and long cuffs wuz celluloid, and he wuz scented high with bergamot, and his manners wuz as affected and showy as his clothes.

AT TWO WEDDINGS

The young carpenter, Ralph West, wuz a strong, manly-lookin' chap, fair-complected, with brown hair wavin' kinder careless back from a' open face, and his blue eyes met you frankly. He had on a gray suit that looked well, and no jewelry, and no perfumery.

Well, Amanda asked me out to one side what



“RALPH WEST WUZ TOOK WITH ETHELINDA AT FIRST”

I thought of Lancelot Tubbs. And I sez kinder cautiously that “I presoomed he had his qualities.”

Sez she: “Ralph West wuz took with Ethelinda at first.”

“Well,” sez I, “she’s a handsome girl.”

“Yes,” sez she, “she’s far too good for a carpenter, and we wuz both glad when he met Mary and they seemed to like each other.”

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“Yes,” sez I, “he’s in love with Mary now; any one can see that, and visey versey.”

“Yes, we wuz glad of it, for my Ethelinda wuz not for a carpenter.”

“Why,” sez I, “carpenters are respectable; they must be since the Lord we worship wuz one.”

“Well,” she sez, “that wuz very different.”

I looked full in her face and didn’t say a thing, but jest that look; but it spoke volumes.

Sez she: “Ethelinda and Lancelot will be married in the early autumn, and you must be sure and come to the weddin’. She is a-goin’ to be married and board; it is so much more stylish to board. She has got twenty tidies and lamp-mats all made, and she’s got paper flowers enough made now to festoon all round the parlor; they can’t afford to have but one room now. She’s a-goin’ to have a bureau bed that shets up, and use the room for a parlor day-times, and she’s a-goin’ to have her washstand shet up so’s she can use it for a music-rack. She’s got a guitar all hand-painted to play on, and lamp-shades, and watch-cases, and lots of things to begin with.”

AT TWO WEDDINGS

"Well," sez I, "I will try to come. Mary is goin' to be married about the same time."

"Yes," sez Amanda, "she's goin' to be married and go right to keepin' house. I wouldn't have Ethelinda do so; why, what time would she have to keep up her music and elocution? Oh, you ought to hear her," sez Amanda, "recite 'The Home of the Heart'; it brings tears. I have seen Lancelot weep like a babe when she wuz speakin' it."

"I spoze Mary is more anxious to make such a home for Ralph than to elocute about it. But I'll come," sez I.

And so we did; we laid our plans ahead, so's to git to Amanda's just about the time they wuz married; it wuz the sixth of October and beautiful weather. Amanda is in real poor circumstances, but knowin' that they wuz such hands to cut style I expected to see great doin's at the weddin' of her only child, and I did, but Amanda never wuz neat; all her strength seemed to run to ornaments and she hadn't none left for the essentials.

It wuz a small house; only two rooms in it besides the kitchen—a small dinin'-room and a parlor. But the windows wuz darkened with

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newspapers, shettin' out the sweet, bright sunshine, and lit up with karseen lamps, some of which smoked. Garlands of paper flowers, some fly-blowed, wuz looped up from the hangin' lamp in the parlor to the celin', and the lamp wuz draped with a showy but frayed-out and dirty yellor miskeeter nettin' lampshade, and that also wuz ornamented with a large paper sunflower. The small mirror with a dingy gilt frame on it, cracked acrost one corner, and lookin' as if generations of flies had used it for their campin' ground, wuz also decorated with paper flowers. And the mantlepiece wuz festooned with a lamberquin of different colored paper looped up with tinsel cord; on it stood some cheap gilt vases, also filled with paper and woosted flowers. Some chromos hung on the wall, some framed with gilt paper and some with acorns and different seeds, and there wuz a showy woosted wreath, and a hair wreath made from the heads of the different relations. The floor wuz covered with cotton ingrain with bold design of red and green, but wore out in places. The wall paper wuz well stricken with years and tore off in spots. The rooms wuz full with the company when we got

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there, and they bein' so small made the crowd hard to git through.

I see Amanda's head, crowned with a wreath of blue wax flowers, risin' in the distance, with the minister who wuz to perform the ceremony by her side. I couldn't git to her, but we both bowed and smiled some from a distance. As I pressed my way into the parlor, I see the presents sot out on a table. They wuz numerous, but ornamental and evanescent, made mostly of gilt paper and cheap ribbin. I laid down beside 'em my good linen tablecloth which looked like a serviceable exotic and a stranger in a strange land. The lamp smoked and the smudge hid some of the presents from me, but I see enough.

But at that minute the excitement told me the bridal procession wuz approachin'. The chamber door opened, but how wuz they to advance? I could not see. But the dense crowd opened a narrer space and the groom appeared, backin' in, leadin' his bride, or ruther drawin' her through the crowd. He wuz dressed as showy as ever, I could see by his back as he drew near; but her face bein' towards me I could see her costoom. Her dress wuz a shiny,

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slazy, white silk, such as is sometimes used for linin's. It didn't look as if it would last till she got to the minister. It wuz made over rustlin', stiff paper cambric with a long train. Her veil, which come to the floor, wuz made of white tarlton and fastened on to her head with a wreath of white paper flowers and a few wax ones.

As they drew nigh us Josiah whispered: "It is good luck to touch a bride; I am goin' to try."

And I whispered back: "If it wuz my girl she would be touched so she would know it, rigged out in that style; but," sez I sadly, "it is her hull bringin' up that has blossomed out to-day, and this is the blow." And I sithed.

"Well," sez he, "I'm goin' to try to touch her when she comes past for good luck." And he bent clear forward as she come past, relyin' on the crowd to keep him up, but they kinder moved aside to make a crack for the bridal procession to pass through and my pardner most fell, and ketched on to the first thing he could to stay him, which happened to be her dress skirt, and it not bein' made on honor it ripped offen the waist considerable, showin' the coarse cotton beneath.

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As I see the *contrary temps* I sez: "Do you think it has brung you good luck, Josiah?" and he snapped out: "Id'no; I can tell better bime-by. It hain't if you're goin' to scold and jaw about it!" And there, I hadn't said a word, only to ask a civil question.

Well, Ethelinda's veil wuz twisted round by her passage through the crowd, till her wreath sot over her left ear and the veil hung down on one side of her face, givin' her a leerin', dissipated look, and with her ripped dress she looked more fit for a police court than a' alter. We couldn't git nigh her to congratulate her, but not wantin' to be behindhand in manners I sez inside of my mind: "May the Lord have mercy on your soul, if you've got a soul."

The refreshments wuz cheap but showy, and havin' partook of enough to be decent, we tore ourselves away. We didn't see the bride's goin' a-way dress, for which I wuz thankful, for, of course, they had to take a weddin' tower. Lancelot borrowed the money of Ralph West. He mortgaged a cow an old aunt had gin him, the only useful present they had. But Amanda said she "didn't care if it wuz foreclosed on, a cow wuz such a' incongruous bridal present,



"LANCELOT MORTGAGED THE COW FOR ITS FULL VALUE"

AT TWO WEDDINGS

and what would they want of a cow anyway at a fashionable boardin'-place." So Lancelot mortgaged it for about its full value, and not



THEY WENT OFF ON A BRIDAL TOWER

bein' able to redeem it, Ralph West got the cow. It wuz a good cow.

But to resoom backwards. They went off on a bridal tower as extended as the cow money could be made to go. Put up to a fashionable hotel, so's to write letters from it, and got their

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meals where they could. But the cow money gin out and they come home famished, but high-headed, and moved their paper flowers and lamberquins and things into the boardin'-house bedroom and sot up—I wuz a-goin' to say a home, but I won't, for it would be lyin'—they sot up a place to stay in.

Well, we went to Ichabod Allen's and stayed all night by their warm request. We had a good time to Ichabod's, and the next day we went to the weddin', Ichabod's folks goin' too, and, as the day before, we arrived jest in time. Mary Jane hain't in no better circumstances than Amanda, but spendin' her money for essentials instead of ornaments she has always got along first-rate.

It wuz a warm, lovely day, seemin' as if Nater had bethought herself of a summer day and tried to duplicate it in October; it wuz as warm as summer with a blue, hazy mist added, which made it more beautiful. As we drawed near the house we see that not only wuz the doors and winders open, but seats wuz arranged out in the front yard. A noble old droopin' ellum stood there, one her Pa and Ma planted the day they wuz married and come

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there to live. Its branches most swep' to the ground, makin' a beautiful natural arbor, more beautiful as Nater had colored the leaves of that and some maples that stood round it with her magic coloring, as if she had sot herself out to do honor to Mary's nuptials.

Well, we hadn't only just time to hitch the horse and go in and greet Mary Jane and git some seats under that noble shade tree when the bride and groom come out of the house arm in arm and took their places right under that beautiful arbor of glowin' foliage before the Elder who wuz to marry 'em. Mary wuz dressed in a pretty white muslin with some white posies in the lace on her bosom and white satin belt, and nestlin' in her golden hair. She looked well, and her dress and hull *toot ensemble* looked as if they would wash, stand the wear and tear of the hard laundry of life and not git the color rubbed off. And her young husband and all looked as if they would wear well; his love, and care and good sense seemed not evanescent, but permanent. Both of their good-lookin' faces shone with pure love and happiness.

After the words wuz spoke that made 'em

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man and wife, and they had received our warm and sincere congratulations, we wuz all invited into the house where we partook of some delicious refreshments—sandwiches of different kinds, cake that would melt in your mouth, and fragrant coffee that looked like amber, with good cream in it. Only a few sorts but all the best of their kind, and Mary made 'em all, so her Ma whispered to me.

We then went into a front room where the presents wuz. Oh, what a difference from Ethelinda's presents! No tinsel or show or paper flowers here; good, useful things that would help a young couple to comfort and happiness in their own home: good linen tablecloths and napkins and towels, some solid silver, a pretty set of china, and some pieces of good, solid furniture from rich relations on both sides; three or four beautiful pictures to help make the new home pleasant, a good clock, some handsome lamps, and more useful and handsome things than I can name over, for they wuz both well liked. Mary Jane had gin a lot of bed linen and coverin's all made up, and his folks, who wuz highly pleased with the match, had gin 'em a lot of handsome furni-

AT TWO WEDDINGS

ture that wuz already in the new home, so Mary Jane told me. I laid my good linen tablecloth down on top of four other ones where it looked contented, as if it wuz to home amongst its own kindred.

Josiah and I wuz invited warm by Mary Jane to stay all night, and so we did. And in about two hours after their marriage Mary and Ralph got into his nice covered buggy and rode over to their own pretty home only a mile off, to begin life under their own pear and apple trees, to change Skripture slightly for the occasion. Josiah and I stopped there the next day on our way home, Mary Jane ridin' over with us. And you ort to see how sweet and pretty their home wuz, for this wuz a home; no shams or show, but comfort and happiness. Ralph had bought this pleasant lot by the side of the evergreen woods and set out his trees and made his garden, and built this house and done it off himself at odd times. The woodwork wuz natural wood of different kinds; the floors also with pretty borders of colored wood that Ralph had fixed in himself, and that would last as long as they did, insurin' cleanliness and health. Two big handsome rugs wuz on the parlor and

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settin'-room, gin by the relations before spoke on, and a good-lookin' one, that she and her Ma had made themselves, most covered the dinin'-room floor.

The shinin' round oak table stood all sot for two with some of the pretty china and silver I'd seen the day before (Ralph had come with a light wagon early in the mornin' and took the things home). The little kitchen shone like glass, it wuz so neat and clean, full of conveniences Ralph had made for her. And their room looked like a picture with its dainty blue rug and white curtains looped back with blue ribbins, and bureau and washstand all covered with white and blue, and two open windows lettin' in the sweet air and sunshine, but no flies, for good wire screens was on all the windows and doors.

Well, as we driv along homewards I thought of the clean, sweet home I had left, and compared it with Ethelinda's bedroom parlor, and bureau bedstead, and washstand music-rack, and cotton carpets, with a shudder. Off on her bridal tower, feelin' strange, lookin' strange, actin' strange most likely, and that stuffy room to come back to full of shams and

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show, and as I thought on't I almost instinctively bust out into the him:

“Oh, what will her futer be—e—e,
Oh, what will her fu—ter be?”

And Josiah sez: “If I wuz a-goin’ to sing I would give warnin’ on’t; you skairt me.”

And I sez: “I wuzn’t singin’ for pleasure, Josiah Allen; I wuz singin’ for principle.”

“Well,” sez he, “we shall git hum in good time for you to cook a meat supper. We’ll git some lamb chops to Jonesville, and I shall be glad to settle down to hum.”

And I sez: “Yes, Josiah, ‘There is no place like Home.’”

“That’s so,” sez Josiah, “and I guess I’ll sing a stanza on’t, Samantha.”

And so he did, or what he called singin’:

“A exile from hum splendor dazzles in vain,
Oh, give me my good shingled cottage agin,
The hens singin’ gayly that come at my call
Give me them with a piece of mind dearer than all,
Hum, hum, sweet, sweet hum,
There is no place like hum,
There is no place like hum.”

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He wuz in real good sperits when we arriv, and built a fire for me while I wuz takin' off my alpacky, and I got a good supper, but quick.

Well, that evenin' I felt so good and comfortable that I said to Josiah, "I feel so happy, Josiah, to be home agin in my own dear home that it seems as if there is only one thing lackin' to complete my perfect contentment and that is to read a leaf or two out of my invaluable Scrap Book."

He had eat a noble supper: I could see the effects on't in his amiable, gentle linement, and he never made a move or said a word agin it, tho as I read he did gradual gather up his forces to dispute it and argy on't. But that only added to my homelike feelin's. The true, true stories I read wuz as follers:

CHAPTER VI

A Wonderful Experience

"I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision and will speak unto him in a dream."

"Stood speechless hearing a voice but seeing no man."

A very eminent clergyman, whose earnest Christianity, spirituality, and burning eloquence placed him in the front rank of the American clergy, relates the following incident which took place in his life:

He was a northern man but had taken a pastorate in New Orleans.

During his wife's absence on a visit north he was stricken with yellow fever.

He had colored servants and good nurses, and they did everything in their power to help him, but there was one lady in his congregation who was exceedingly kind to him during his illness. She was an intimate friend of himself and wife, and everything she could do for her afflicted pastor she did. At last he slowly recovered his health and strength again.

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This lady, whom we will call Mrs. E., was a woman of wealth, and of course he could not offer to pay for her many kind and thoughtful acts, but he made her a handsome present.

Time passed, and he had finished his pastorate in New Orleans and after many changes had now settled in a large northern city. He had a very busy life, for he and his wife were great social favorites, as well as hard workers in the Church of the Master.

Years passed away and the memory of Mrs. E. was well nigh obliterated by the mass of living vital interests of many years.

He was sitting in his study one day engaged in deep study on an abstruse theme. When suddenly there came to him a message—sent to him he knew not by what means, but it came with all the power and directness of the time when God sent His angels down to talk with man face to face.

“Send Mrs. E. some money!”

But the clergyman could hardly believe the divine messenger and he reasoned.

“Why, Mrs. E. is rich; she don’t need money, and I gave her a handsome present in acknowledgement of her kindness to me.” And he

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turned to his book again and tried to lose himself in study. When again came that strong spiritual message:

“Send Mrs. E. some money!”

He stopped his reading, and so real seemed the voice that spoke to his soul that he answered it aloud:

“Why should I send her money?”

And then again followed the train of reasoning we have set down. And again he tried to lose himself in study. But the third time came that message, swift, strong, peremptory:

“Send Mrs. E. some money!”

He could not resist longer. He rose and got a check and sent her an order for fifty dollars.

In due time came a letter from Mrs. E. She said that in the long interval that had passed since she met this clergyman, she had met with reverses and lost all her fortune, and at the time when he received this spiritual message she was kneeling by the dead body of her sister in New Orleans, asking the Lord to send her in some way the money to bury her. Her sister had died and she had literally no money for her burial.

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In what way we can not tell, but in some way we know, the clergyman received the message from her.

Did it flash up to the ear of the Lord? Did he send it back again to the heart of His anointed? I can't tell.

Sez Josiah, "I believe he wuz out of his



"HE KINDER DREMP IT"

head; I believe he had another touch of the yaller fever; I don't believe he wuz conscientious of what he wuz doin'."

Sez I, "You mean conscious."

"Yes, I don't believe he knew what he wuz about; he kinder dremp it."

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"The letter from Mrs. E. wuz pretty good proof, and the bank didn't seem to think he dremp it—they made him pay the fifty dollars."

"Well," sez Josiah, "I believe that woman telegrafted it to his home and some other woman hollered out the message to him."

"But it wuzn't spoke loud; it wuz spoken only to his soul."

"How do you know?"

"Because I wuz told so."

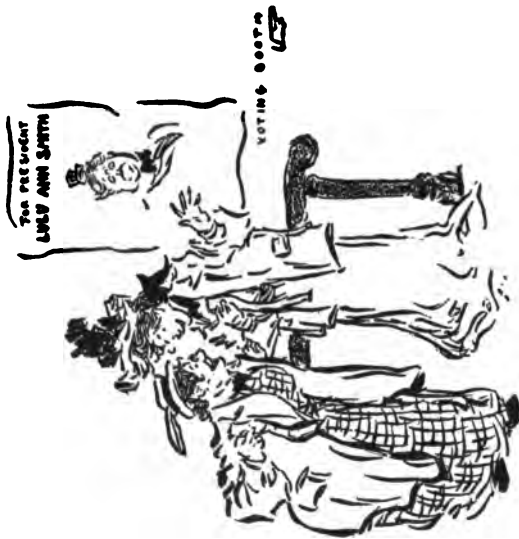
"Did he tell you?"

"Yes, and his wife did, too."

"Then it's all explained; no woman ever got anything straight yet. She got it all mixed up and you've gin it another stir tellin' it. It needs a man to straighten stories right out. A woman hearn about it and hollered it to him, and he sent the money. It is all explained jest as straight as a string."

"Yes, jest about like a string," sez I. "Jest about as strong as a thread of No. 90 bastin' cotton."

"I hain't a blamin' you, neither on you," sez he with elaborate pity and commiseration writ on his linement, "Wimmen hain't spozed to git things correct. They can't vote; they don't



"THEY WOULD COMPARE THEIR VOTES AND CACKLE"

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know enough to fold their vote right, to say nothin' of votin'. And if they should go into one of the booths to vote, they would upset the pole leanin' over to holler to some other woman in the next booth, to ask her how she sot up that new kind of tattin, or how to color but-nut, or to tell her she had got a new bunnet, or sunthin' or ruther. And then they would go against the law and compare their votes together and cackle. Wimmen's minds are weak."

CHAPTER VII

Help From the Unseen Country

*"In my distress I called unto the Lord and
He heard me."*

A WELL known writer of international fame relates the following incident which she thinks is a convincing proof that an over-ruling Providence watches over His believing children in the hour of their greatest need:

She was very busy writing upon a book which she had promised to have done at a certain time, and she had repeated warnings by a severe pain that occasionally darted through her right arm and hand, that she was working too hard. But knowing that she must complete the book at the time she had promised, she would only stop her work for a little while, until the pain had grown lighter or had disappeared for the time.

At this time she did all her writing with her own hand, and as she copied and re-copied all her manuscript over and over again, the mere physical labor was very wearing.

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One morning, after having worked very hard, until she was exceedingly weary, this acute pain again shot through her hand and arm. But instead of heeding the warning as she had done heretofore by stopping the work for a while, she, knowing the urgency of the case, kept on with it regardless of the sharp warning, when the terrible sensation returned more violently than ever before, and instead of being confined to the hand and arm, it seemed to go through her whole body.

She then, indeed, dropped her work in haste and left her study and went down on to the lawn and walked about under the green spreading trees in a state of intense agony and alarm.

The work had to be done at a certain time. Her word was given and much depended upon it. She could not dictate it, for she could not have anyone about her when she was composing.

She felt weak and powerless and utterly discouraged, and as we all know, this is the time that help is promised to those who ask for it. And she did ask most earnestly that the good Father would help her in some way, tho how the help could be given in this case she

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could form no idea, for the outlook from a human point of view seemed utterly hopeless.

But with Him whom she asked for help all things are possible. In just the time from that hour of human weakness and strong supplication, that mail could reach her from a town in another state, a letter came to her from a perfect stranger, telling her that the writer had no reason in writing to her, only he liked her books, and he being an author himself and having received so much help from using a phonograph to record his manuscript and then having it taken down by a typewriter, he felt impelled to write to her, that she, too, might be helped in the way he had.

Here was a plain solution to the seemingly hopeless problem that had never occurred to her. But it solved all her troubles at once. Within two weeks she had her phonograph, her typewriter, and all her troubles were ended.

Sez Josiah, "I'll bet that man wuz a agent for that phonograph and made money by it."

"He wuz not an agent; he wuz an author and a clergyman."

"Well, I've known ministers to putter round

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and sell things, books and such. Mebby he had an interest in the typewritin' machine; mebby he had so much money for every one he sold."

"He specially stated, Josiah, in his letter, that he wuz not interested in the sale of type-



"I'VE KNOWN MINISTERS TO PUTTER ROUND AND
SELL THINGS"

writers or phonographs, but wrote simply out of good will, and to help her."

"Oh, I've hearn men talk like that lots of times. Men are sly as the old Harry. Or that is—as it were—I mean, men do occasionally, very occasionally, they have been known to, or that is, my father stated that he'd hearn of one or two such cases when he wuz a child, of one

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of us men talkin' out of self interest, wantin' to make sunthin' out of it. You know that is a laudable sperit, Samantha, to be equenomical and industrious; it looks well in a man."

"Yes, I know, Josiah, I love to see you stand up for your own sect, but in this case he didn't write with any such motive."

"Well, what under the sun and moon do you believe?"

"I believe that in some way we can't understand this woman's urgent need wuz telegraphed up to the Great Fountain of Help and the man who wrote to her wuz simply an agent used to give the needed help."

"Oh, you do give up he wuz a agent, do you? But it looks better to say of a man he is a commercial traveler; you have to come right round to my idee. He wuz a commercial traveler! But as for your idee of a telegraffin', that's jest like a woman's foolish, onpractical idees. How could a telegraff message be sent up through the sky? That is jest like a woman, talkin' of sendin' a message up through the sky. Jest imagine one of us sensible, practical men startin' out to set poles with nothin' for 'em to rest on!"

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I sithed, and that's every word I said. But he seemed to resent that sith and sez:

"Oh, you may look as onbelievin' as you want to, but I'd love to have you tell me how they would set the telegraff poles! That's a corker for you, Samantha; how would they dig the post holes out of nothin' and set 'em on nothin', not to speak of the men standin' on nothin' stringin' the wires.

"It pains me, Samantha, to have a pardner show such ignorance. And then there is another solid, statesmanlike reason agin it that a man can see as plain as the nose on his face; we read that the streets of the new Jerusalem



"HOW COULD MESSAGES GIT THROUGH
THAT SOLID GOLD"

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are paved with gold. How could messages git through that solid gold, most probable a cubit thick or more, and no pole on the other side, or talkin' machine that I ever hearn on."

I sithed agin and sez, "He that hath ears to hear let him hear. I might talk to you from now to sun-up, Josiah, and you wouldn't understand my thought no better than you do now."

"Any man or woman who sez I hain't got ears, Samantha, are sayin what he or she can't prove." And he took holt of that member of his anatomy and turned his head round. "What do you call that, Samantha? If that hain't a ear, what is it?" And he craned his neck forward so I could see still plainer.

And I sez, "Yes, and there is another cree-ter that has ears, long ones too, and brays considerable, but them ears hain't open tryin' to understand the deep things of earth and Heaven no more than some human donkeys are."

I then riz up in quite a stately way and walked out of the room.

I wouldn't have compared my pardner to that animal for nothin' in the world if I hadn't

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been so kinder beat out. And I made it up to him by a extra good supper.

Married life is full of jest such experiences. Hasty words are said, anon or oftener. Quick remorse follows. Love and tender-eyed Memory scatter their sweet dewy flowers and put out the transient flame of anger.

And then follers on swift footed Atonement carryin' her scales tippin' down heavy on the side of affection.

But after experiments of every variety the female pardner is capable of tryin'; after the deepest researches into the fields of science and philosophy, after probin' the past, the present and the probable future for healin' panekys to use in such a time.

I must still state as the result of this deep and arjous study what I have so often stated heretofore. That repentance takin' the form of tears and sentimental words hain't half so satisfactory to a male pardner as a oncommon good meal of vittles, served by a cheerful faced, affectionate actin' pardner. All female companions, havin' a investigatin', philosophical turn of mind will, I am sure, agree with me in this.

CHAPTER VIII

About Hired Girls

JOSIAH and I have been on a visit to Widder Twitchell's. We arrove about six P. M. She wuz Barbara Smith, my cousin on my own side. She married a minister, a rider of the Conference. He rode on it till he died, then he got off. He wuz a good man with lots of property. He didn't ride the Conference from needecessity; he rid it from choice.

Barbara took advice, invested her money to good advantage and laid up interest every year, besides livin' well, educatin' her girl Barbara up high, and havin' all the luxuries of life and a hired girl. The girl, Serintha Green, I used to go to school with, but hadn't seen her for years and years. Barbara—Bab, as they call her—is jest home from boardin'-school, and I see that her mother kinder stood in awe of her, as mothers will sometimes of a bright young girl full of life and sperits and accomplishments. You know such a girl can make her Ma



Serantha Green

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feel like thirty cents, or even fifteen. But they are both perfect ladies, delicate and dainty and nice as they can be. Bab had only got home the day before we arrove there. She had been away from home for three years, and I see that there wuz lots of things that didn't suit her around the house, though she wuz too ladylike to come right out and say so.

I had noticed at the supper-table a tall, defiant-lookin' woman with a green woosted dress on, and she wuzn't what you might call a ornament to the table, because her dress wuz all flour on the waist. They had warm biscuit for supper, and honey, and I learned afterward that she had spilled some honey on the front of the waist before she made the biscuit, and then the flour stuck. I mistrusted that she wuz the hired girl; they didn't introduce me, but I see Miss Twitchell begin to open her mouth, and then she ketched Bab's eye and closed it agin.

But I mistrusted it wuz Serintha Green. She looked dretful oncomfortable settin' up straight to the table, feelin' awful about the looks of her waist, I knew, for she wuz naterally neat. But truly she wuzn't to blame, for she had had to hurry the supper on account of Bab's bo, a

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young college professor; he had to ketch the train, and Serintha tryin' to do her duty had ondone herself, and had no time to change her dress. So she sot there with her face red as blood. Bab and the young man wuz talkin' about literatoor and things, and Miss Twitchell and Josiah and I talkin' about old times. I did say to Serintha, out of politeness, that "it looked like a spell of weather," and she said "yes." And Miss Twitchell spoke to her once on politics, and Serintha glared at her dretful. Miss Twitchell bein' frustrated had forgot that Serintha wuz a ragin' Democrat, and Miss Twitchell is on the other side. But the reason why we all on us wuz frustrated wuz, we had to all on us be a-walkin' round so much. Seven times Serintha had to git up and go into the pantry for things: she had hurried so that she had forgot to set the table as it ort to be. The dinin'-room bein' small, and Serintha, bein' so hurried, had sot the table too fur back against the wall, and every time she riz up the young professor and Bab would have to get up and move their chairs to let her out, and then move 'em agin to let her in. Why, it made things fairly turbulent, and I see Bab's

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face git redder and redder every minute, and she would give kinder reproachful, implorin' looks to her mother, and her mother would look kinder apoligizin' and appealin' toward her, and pitiful and pleadin' toward Serintha, as if she wuz between two fires—hot fires, too, as indeed she wuz.

Well, after supper wuz over (and we all felt relieved when the agony wuz passed) Bab took the professor to the train, and Miss Twitchell wuz sent for by a neighbor, whose child wuz sufferin' voyalent with colic, and at my request she went for a little while, though she didn't want to; and havin' got five or six spots of mud on my mantilly I went out into the kitchen after Miss Twitchell wuz gone to see if I could wash out the spots with cold water and press 'em.

Serintha put the flatiron on and gin me the water and sponge, but with a cold, defiant air, and all the while she looked belligerent at me, and finally she broke the silence by sayin' in a loud, sour voice:

“My mother owned a pongee dress with pure silk stripes in it and a black silk calash, and a real woosted work-bag.”

ABOUT HIRED GIRLS

Sez I gently, rubbin' the spot, "Nobody disputes it."

And jest as I tackled the second spot she sez: "I am as good as Miss Twitchell or any of her visitors! My father's uncle wuz a forehanded man."

I didn't say nothin' to dispute her, but kep' to work at my mantilly, and she continued on: "My sister had a Circassion mantilly with tabs that come down to her feet."

Sez I mildly: "As I don't put on any airs over my mantilly, Serintha, it don't mortify me to know that your family owned one with longer tabs."

"You do put on airs!" sez she, comin' out plain.

"Why, Serintha Green!" sez I, rubbin' on the third spot, "I hain't put on a air, not a single air."

"Well, you have felt 'em if you hain't put 'em on; you feel above me because I am a hired girl."

Sez I: "Serintha, in my opinion there is no work in the world more honorable than to make a comfortable home. Have I acted, Serintha, as if I felt above you?"

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“No, but I know you felt it, and we wuz girls together, and I hain’t no doubt but you feel above me because you have got a home and a husband.”

“Husbands, Serintha!” sez I, as I attacked the fourth spot, and my tone wuz mild for I pitied her, “husbands hain’t nothin to feel haity or conceited over if you look at ’em with the eye of a filosopher.” Sez I solemnly: “They are dispensations of Providence, Serintha, and are to be used as such.”

“I knew that you would feel above me before you come here and I wuz lookin’ out for it.”

Sez I: “That’s the way Mormons and other false sects prove their doctrines out of the Bible; they read it tryin’ to find proofs for their belief; that is the way you read me.”

“Well, I am as good as anybody, and I want it understood plain that I am. I see that you’ve got your bunnet fixed over; mebbly you think that you’re better than I am because you’ve got a better-lookin’ bunnet, but I’ve seen the day that I could wear as good-lookin’ bunnets as anybody that went into Jonesville meetin’-house, and I am jest as good now as I ever wuz, and I feel fully equal to anybody even if they

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have got new bunnets or bunnets fixed over as good as new."

Sez I: "I don't rise no heights on my bunnet, Serintha; I don't stand up on it at all."

"I don't work out because I am obleeged to; I come to Miss Twitchell's to accommodate her. I am as good as any Elder's wife in the Conference, and if I can't eat to the table I am goin' to leave."

She wuz rememberin' the honey and flour, and I see that the mortification had struck in. Sez she: "I sot there in perfect agony lookin' like fury, all stuck up with flour, and Miss Bab in her white dress and laces she knew that I felt as if I would go down through the floor every minute, and I a-jumpin' up all the time and waitin' on 'em. But I sot to the table, and I will set to the table, and if I don't set to the table I leave."

"Well, you sot," sez I, "and hadn't ort to complain."

"Yes, I did!" sez she, and she sot a pie-plate down hard. "My father always thought he wuz jest as good as anybody if he did work out by day's works for a livin', and he brought me up to think I wuz, and he wuz always lookin'

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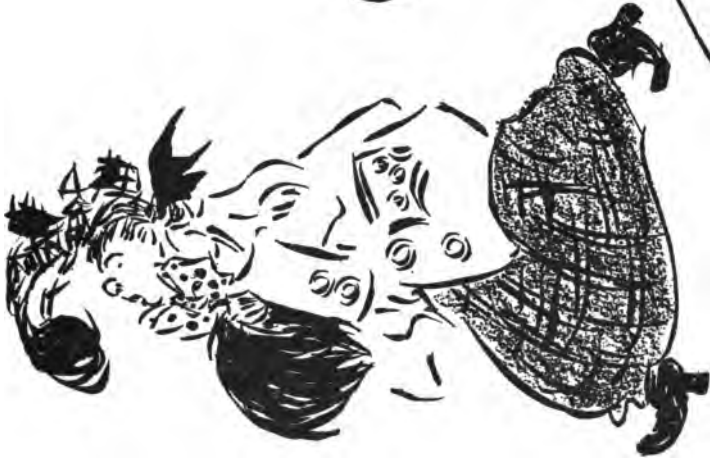
out to see if folks felt above him, and I am."

"Well," sez I, "it don't seem to be very happyfyin' to you; you don't seem to enjoy yourself, Serintha."

"Well, I don't; folks are so mean and scornful. But sometimes things happen that makes me tickled. If I wuz ever tickled over anything it wuz when Bridget Murphy left Judge Gray's. They wanted her to wait on the table, and she told 'em if she couldn't eat with 'em and be one of the family she wouldn't stay; so she started up and left when there wuz two sick ones and a house full of company."

"Is she doin' better now where she is?" sez I.

"No, not so fur as the work goes; she has to work twice as hard, and she don't have any conveniences, and it is onhealthy down by the water, and they most always cheat their girls out of their wages. But she sets to the table with 'em, for I see her myself with her sleeves rolled up, and her arms and dress all dirty right out of cleanin' house, and her hair all touzled. I see her in jest that condition settin' to the table, for they had to have a girl, and she wouldn't stay unless she could set down to the



“ SHE STARTED UP AND LEFT ”

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table and be one of the family, and they are ladies.”

Sez I: “Bridget’s settin’ down at the table with ladies didn’t make her a lady, if she wuzn’t one in the first place. And Bridget couldn’t stay with the family and be one of ’em; it wuzn’t in the bargain; when they left the table she went into the kitchen and they into the parlor. If she could git the family to go into the kitchen and wash the dishes and do her work, that would be worth quarrelin’ over, but she can’t. They hired her to do their work, and if they pay her for it there is nothin’ dishonorable either way. They git the rest and she gits the pay, and the labor is jest as honorable as the repose, and no honorabler. If anybody wants to be waited on at the table and are able to hire it done, why not let ’em?”

“But she can feel that she is jest as good as they be now.”

“She may be better than they be, but she don’t prove it in that way. Now, Sister Sylvester Bobbett and I might say that we wuz jest as good as Queen Alexandra, and no doubt we be; we’re all members of the meetin’-house, and been married and know what trouble is and

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long-sufferin'. We might gin out that we're goin' there for an afternoon's visit the next time she holds a reception, and take our piecin' up and knittin', and sally out, Miss Bobbett dressed in a black alpacky with a bask and linen collar, and I with a good dark gingham and a barred muslin apron. Well, now, spozin' we should git in; do you spoze that we should be happy right there in the midst of females robed in satins and velvets, low-necked, with long trains floatin' out covered with diamonds, and all on 'em lookin' supersillyous at us, and like as not pokin' fun at our crazy quilts, and servants all dressed up in different colors and gold lace and buttons sailin' back and forth and hittin' aginst us, and Alexandra so full of care and company not able to say a word to us? How much comfort do you spoze we should take? It hain't a matter of goodness at all, as I look at it; it is a matter of common-sense and comfort. Why not do what will make and give the most comfort to both parties? Lots of hired girls are better than their mistresses, I hain't a doubt on't, but because I like fresh air and am good enough to have it, is it any sign that I should go and set down on the peak of

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the barn? I am good enough to do it, there hain't a doubt of that, but I shouldn't set easy, and would be afraid of fallin' off. I should take as much agin comfort settin' on the ground."

I see that Serintha begun to look some softer and I continued: "I believe that the best way to git along is to treat the world simply and honestly. If we are as good as other folks, why tell it? They will know it, and if we say we are when we hain't, we are lyin'. Act friendly and kindly to everybody, high and low, not puttin' on airs, and not actin' meachin', handlin' our skeletons jest as easy as we can as we move 'em from place to place (for we have got to carry 'em wherever we go). Wear a posy of heartsease on our bosoms, and let the world look on that, instead of the sad heart beatin' underneath; it will be better for the world and for us."

Sez Serintha, "The flat is hot."

And she brung me down from my hite of eloquence real voyalent, but I felt kinder encouraged about her.

Well, the last night of our stay there the young professor come back agin; he had been

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up beyend there to visit a aunt, and he wuz a-goin to stay all night there to Miss Twitchell's and go on home in the mornin'. And it bein' a very pleasant afternoon we had all walked over to she that wuz Karen Smith's, and it bein' a real cool evenin' when we got back we wuz cold, and there wuzn't a fire in the house only in the kitchen, and so Miss Twitchell, knowin' that we wuz all in the family (Bab and the young professor are engaged), invited us all to go out in the kitchen and warm us before retirin' and goin' to bed.

Serinth's kitchen wuz always as clean as a pin, so we went out and the fire wuz burnin' so good, and it wuz so pleasant there we sot there talkin' for quite a spell, and Bab and her bo wuz laughin' over some joke of their own.

And I spoze Serintha heard our voices and the laughin' and mistrusted that we wuz out there in the kitchen pokin' fun at her, and that she couldn't stand. So she crep' down the back stairs to apply her ear to the crack of the door.

But alas for human expectations; how futile they are! Bab's side-saddle hung there on a nail driv up against the wall, and the stirrup

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hangin down on to the stairs, Serintha ketched her foot in it and fell, and the saddle fell on to her, and she jest bust the door right open and come into the room on her hands and feet in her long white nightdress and a side-saddle on her back.

She couldn't speak. She wuz stunted. And the young professor wuz stunted, too, and so wuz Bab. They withdrew with speed and simeltaneous. Miss Twitchell, bein' given to highsteriks, fell into 'em, and for the next hour my hands and heart wuz full. My pardner bein' tired had already retired to bed, and not knowin' that he could do much good in such a time as this I let him lay.

I see that my first duty wuz to Serintha, for though as the poet sings she wuz "all saddled and bridled," she wuz not "fit for the fray;" no, fur from it.

As I say, she wuz stunted. The fall had jarred her insides, and the dretful mortification attendin' the incident had struck in, and for the next half hour I stood over her rubbin' her with campfire and anarky, half and half, tacklin' the mortification with reasonable and consolin' words, and dosin' her internal or-



**“COME INTO THE ROOM ON HER HANDS AND FEET IN
HER LONG WHITE NIGHTDRESS AND A
SIDE-SADDLE ON HER BACK”**

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gans with catnip and boneset. Also soothin' Miss Twitchell at intervals until I got her soothed down, and then she, too, helped rub Serintha.

Well, Serintha Green wuz bed-sick for the next two days and nights, and at her request I took the most of the care on her. And mebby it wuz the jar of the fall and may be it wuz the waterin' of the ground with catnip and boneset, and mebby it wuz my talk, but 'tennyrate the good seed I had tried to sow seemed to spring up and flourish.

From the very minute I took the saddle off from her, from the very minute I onharnessed her, I see a change; she lost that defiant, mad look, and she seemed to take good acts as they wuz meant to be took, with simple good nature and gratitude; seemed to look less on life as a battle-ground, and more as a place to plant good seeds of kindly acts and pleasant words, and didn't seem to look out so much for fun to be poked at her. She seemed to be more obleegin' and ready to serve, and at the same time more self-respectin', and, as is nateral, more thought on.

There wuz a great change for the better

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in Serintha Green. Mebby it wuz my talk, and then agin, for I am modest—mebby it wuz the catnip.

We got to talkin' it over on the way home. The road wuz kinder muddy and we had to go slow, and it wuz after supper time and Josiah wuz real fraxious and worrisome, so he got on the off side of the argument, not that he felt that way but to kinder let off his oncomfortable feelin's, some like a overhet engine lettin' off steam, and before we got home we had words. And we both held our noses quite high, and kinder tossted our heads some as we walked in from the hoss barn.

But home seemed so pleasant and comfortable and it seemed so good to be there that I soon felt ashamed of myself and brung my nose down where it ort to be and held my head on a level agin, and the good supper I got ameliorated Josiah's feelin's more'n considerable; it would have completed the soothin' job for him but unfortunately he stubbed his toe on the rockin'-chair as he went to change his boots, and for some time he acted, and I felt it my duty to smooth out the last wrinkles of anger and sufferin' on his linement, so I used witch-hazel outwardly and two incidents from

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my scrap-book inwardly, and by the time the clock struck half-past eight peace and serenity rained down upon us in copious estorments.



"UNFORTUNATELY HE STUBBED HIS TOE"

And as the clock struck nine he had disputed 'em all, root and branch, and wuz in a perfectly serene and complacent state and wuz a windin' up the clock with a happy linement.

CHAPTER IX

"Both Figgers Melted Away Like a Mist"

"The young men shall see visions and the young maidens shall dream dreams."

THE wife of an eminent artist, a pupil of Millet and Jerome, relates this incident:

She was an intellectual, spiritual woman, but one who rarely dreamed. But one night when absent from her home on a short journey she fell asleep and dreamed that she was lying on her bed at home, and she saw her husband going away from her toward the door of the room where she was lying.

As he reached the door he stopped and looked back at her and smiled.

And just at this moment another form of her husband appeared at her bedside. But the face of this figure looked radiant and luminous and young. She looked at them both in wonder, and then she thought to herself:

"Now I will put out my hand and touch this:

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figure that is so near me at my bedside and if it is a spirit my hand will go through it, and I shall know it is not mortal." So she put out her hand and touched the arm of the figure, but it seemed real and solid. She was greatly troubled and perplexed, and she cried out to the figure at the door that seemed on the eve of departing:

"Don't go, dear, don't leave me! for I don't know which is which; I don't know which is you!"

He turned the worn, tired face to her and smiled again that tender, understanding smile, as if he knew all the beautiful mystery, and she, too, would understand it in good time. And then both figures seemed to melt away like a mist. When she returned home and told her husband her dream he said:

"Well, Laura, you have had your warning; my days are numbered."

In just ten days he went from her.

She said she interpreted the dream, that it was meant to show her that her husband's worn mortal body that left her was the unreal, the fugitive. And the spiritual body that appeared so near to her as he left, was the

"FIGGERS MELTED AWAY"



**"I'LL BET SOME OF HER
FOLKS DRESSED UP AS TWO
SPOOKS"**

real, the true one that would always remain near her.

Sez Josiah, "I'll bet some of her folks, young

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folks mebby, dressed up as two spooks jest to scare her.”

“She wuz asleep, Josiah.”

“Well, then most probable she’d been eatin’ sunthin’ that disagreed with her and she had the night-mair.”

“But it wuz a beautiful dream. The old, weary, human body disappearing, as the luminous spiritual body appeared close to her; it was not at all like a night-mair.”

“Well, mebby she see double; lots of folks do. Aunt Sindy Curtis could see double half the time. Or mebby she had glasses on that didn’t fit her.”

“She didn’t wear glasses; she wuz a young woman, and she wuz asleep.”

“How do you know she wuz? Folks are awake half the time when they think they are asleep. Or mebby half of her wuz asleep and half awake. That’s it, that’s the very explanation, plain as the nose on your face. Half on her wuz awake and half on her wuz asleep. Half on her see one figger and half on her the other.”

Sez I, sithin’ hard, “What I can’t understand, Josiah Allen, is your explanation of

“FIGGERS MELTED AWAY”

things. I can understand these wonderful mysteries better than I can your elaborate explanations, which you are so willing to put forth. They baffle me; I can't tackle them.”

“No, that is so; your mind hain't strong enough to argy it out. I'm glad to see you own up to it.

“We men don't blame the weaker sect, Samantha; we pity 'em. And we're willin' to spend our valuable time tryin' to make things plainer to 'em.

“Now here is another explanation, Samantha, of what you've been readin' that mebbly you might git the hang on if you should try to.

“The biggest philosophers and scientists agree now with me that one mind can influence another. Send thought hundreds and thousands of milds away and influence 'em; make 'em do thus and so. Can you git the run of that thought, Samantha?”

“Yes, I can grasp that idee, Josiah, and I believe it, too. But how duz it explain this incident?”

“Oh well, I never hearn, as many years as I've belonged to the meetin'-house, of a preacher bein' called to shoot a idee out and

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also to make himself a target for the arrer. Or to use another metafor that mebbly is more suited to your understandin'. You can't expect a man to be the basket and the chips too. You're onreasonable, Samantha, to expect it."

And with an expression of serene compla-



AND I WENT OUT TO SET THE
SPONGE FOR GRIDDLE CAKES

gency he took down the old Peruna almanac and went to readin' the weather prophet's report.

And I went out to set the sponge for my griddle-cakes, knowin' Josiah wouldn't enjoy his breakfast without 'em, and I felt, too, that

“FIGGERS MELTED AWAY”

Silence and Meditation would be welcome companions for a spell.

But I hadn't more'n added my yeast to the flour when I remembered Dr. Bombus'es prescription, and I left my batter hastily and went back and read another truthful incident, so's Josiah could dispute it and ease his mind still more.

CHAPTER X

“A Widder for an Advertisement”

“He hath sent me unto you.”

*“I have never seen the righteous forsaken
or His seed begging bread.”*

A VERY sweet Christian woman, widow of a devoted minister of the gospel, relates the following incident:

After her husband's death (and they were so attached to each other that the parting was like death to her), yet she could not pause even to indulge in the sad luxury of grief, for now he was gone she was the only bread-winner, and his two little ones were left for her to care for.

She tried the poor gentlewoman's resource, teaching. But in order to get a situation she was obliged to go among strangers, and in a new place, amid strange faces, take up the heavy burden of life and make the best fight she could against want and woe, for her children's sake.

“A WIDDER”

Her wages were small, and she only received her pay once in three months.

The morning of Thanksgiving dawned with a cold gray sky and storms of icy driving sleet.

As she stood in her little parlor, looking out on the desolate scene, her poor aching heart was utterly discouraged and disheartened.

Her small means were entirely exhausted, and she had not a penny left in her purse; winter was upon her, her coal was almost gone, and she had used nearly the last food that there was in the house, and what could she do? How could she keep her children warmed and fed?

She was surrounded by strangers; she had no relatives or friends in the place, and if she had, she felt that her pride would not let her ask for help.

No, she had told no one of her troubles, only like a bird to its mountain her soul betook itself to its refuge. That day at morning worship, oh how earnestly, beseechingly, did she ask the Divine Helper to come to her rescue to save her children, to save her from perishing in the icy cold and from starvation.

But it was a cheerless Thanksgiving to her as she watched her children, too young to com-

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prehend their mother's thought. And how these thoughts were divided between present want and losses and loneliness, and memories of the happy past, when their father was with them.

What made her heart still heavier this morning, the grocer who had trusted her till her wages were due, had sold out his business. A stranger had bought his stock, and she feared he would send in the bills already due and refuse to trust, not knowing her.

As she stood there in her little room, lost in anxious thought, praying to the Lord of the widow and fatherless, and almost heart-broken at the thought of her children, his children, suffering with cold and hunger, she looked out of her window and saw the new grocer, who was an old gentleman, coming in at her gate. She had seen him in church and knew his face.

She said to herself, "He has come for his pay, and oh, what shall I do? What can I do for food for my children? I can not pay him, and of course he will refuse to trust me any more."

And thoughts, too, of the terrors of the law floated through her mind, of the poor comforts

“A WIDDER”

they possessed being taken from them to satisfy the claims of lawful debts.

Visions of the old chairs and tables and beds being taken from her, visions of her children cowering down on the floor, crying with the cold and hunger, all made her poor heart beat, and her eyes grow large with fear and dread in her pale face, as she opened the door for him.

Almost his first words were, “I don’t know how I am to tell you, a stranger, why I came here this morning, but I *had* to come; I was sent.

“This morning while at family prayers, I prayed for guidance and for divine light to help me in bestowing my usual Thanksgiving offering in the Lord’s name, immediately you came into my mind.

“I thought it cannot be that I am to go to her, a stranger, with a gift. How can I do it? And I never heard that she was at all in want and she may be offended.

“But the thought of you remained with me, and I could not rid myself of it; I *had* to come.”

And with this he put twenty-five dollars into her hand.

After long years had passed, and prosperity

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and wealth had come to this widow, she wept as she told me of this Thanksgiving morning.

Sez Josiah: "I believe that grocer done that for an advertisement. He had jest sot up in the place; he wanted custom, and I believe he thought it would draw.

"Jest see how they post up their Liver Pills and Balm, etc., on fences, and bridges and stuns. Why if they had paste-brushes long enough they would paste advertisements of condensed milk and patent strainers, and nus-sin'-bottles on the milky way, or make that old man in the moon wear a board vest advertisin' dry goods or circuses; they wouldn't like nothin' better.

"I believe that grocer man used that widder for an advertisement."

"How could it be for an advertisement when he told her specially to say nothin' to anyone about what he had gin her, as he always wanted such things sacred to himself and his Lord."

"Oh he wuz cute, that man wuz. He knew human nater. He knew a woman can't keep a secret anyway, and if you bind her not to tell

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she is as good as a Morning Herald or World as an advertiser.

"He knew which side his bread wuz buttered. I'll bet he jest laid up money out of that job."

"How come this man to think of her, a stranger, and that he must help her, jest at the very time when her prayers wuz ascendin' to the Lord for help?"

"Well, mebbly he heard her; mebbly she wuz a prayin' out loud."

"Yes, most likely he could hear her half a mild away."

"Well, wimmen's voices are pretty shrill; they can be hearn a long way. Jest think how it is when you and Miss Gowdey or Betsy Bobbett git to talkin' about news, or other wimmen. Why, I've hearn you out to the ten-acre lot time and agin. To be sure the winder and door would be open."

"Yes, and to be sure, the ten-acre lot comes up most to the kitchen door, and I've seen you, Josiah Allen, leave your ploughin' and come in jest to hear Betsy Bobbett go on."

"*I come in to git a drink,*" sez he, short as

“A WIDDER”

pie crust. “And you’ll find out that I tell you the truth about that widder. He hearn her.”

“She wuzn’t prayin’ loud at all; it wuz only in her heart and soul that she wuz talkin’ to the Lord, askin’ Him to help her.”

“Oh well,” sez Josiah, scratchin’ his head hard, “there wuz sunthin’ about it that I hain’t time to explain to you, Samantha. If I wuzn’t put to it for time, I could explain it all out to you, but it takes so much time and patience to explain things so wimmen can understand ’em, their minds are so narrer and contracted. I’ve got to feed the hosses for the night.”

And he riz up kinder quick and ketched up his hat. “I hain’t the time, Samantha!” sez he.

“Yes,” sez I, “I know you are put to it for time; it reminds me of a young minister once who wuz cultivatin’ his first beard, who told me he hadn’t time that mornin’ to explain to me about the origin of evil. But he promised to come sometime and explain all them Bible mysteries to me when he had half an hour or so to spare.

“I feel to pity you, Josiah, to think you hain’t time to explain these wonderful things to me that have been incomprehensible to saint and

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philosopher from the foundation of the world. It seems such a loss to the world, that the only man who ever understood all these mysteries hain't got the time to explain 'em.

"I'd almost be willin' to hire a man for a few minutes to take your place out in the barnyard so's to leave you free. It would be such a boon to me and the world at large."

"Yes," sez he, "if there wuz anybody we could git. But I wouldn't feel to trust anybody but myself out there to the barn with the stock, so I'll have to go."

And he hastened out.



"AND HE HASTENED OUT"



CHAPTER XI

How Julian Wuz Strapped to His Father

JOSIAH and I went to visit she that wuz Lucinda Smith, Lucinda Tarble that now is. She is my second cousin and I like her, but never liked the way she brung up her children—she had a boy of seven and a girl of six.

Now I believe in lookin' after children, yes, indeed I do, and gittin' 'em headed right, and watchin' over 'em. But it stands to reason that they must learn to stand alone or they will fall down; you can't always be right there propin' 'em up.

But Lucinda felt different; she wouldn't let her children make a move or lift a finger without her standin' over 'em and tellin' 'em jest how fur to move, and how fur the finger must be wigged.

It wuz most night when we got to Lucinda's. They live in a handsome house, for they are forehanded folks. And Lucinda acted real pleased to see us. She come out on the piazza,

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as we driv up the handsome gravel driveway to the door, with her knittin' in her hand—a long, narrer, queer-lookin' thing—and told us how



**“SHE WOULDN'T LET
HER CHILDREN MAKE
A MOVE”**

glad she wuz that we had come, and that we had got there jest in time to see Bizer, for he and the little boy, Julian, was goin' to start for Michigan in the mornin.”

JULIAN STRAPPED TO HIS FATHER

We had a good supper, and the house wuz in perfect order, only so many safeguards stood around, built up from the floor and swingin' down from the celin', fencin' the children off from the fire, and the lamp, and the suller-way, etc., it made things look queer.

After supper whilst the girl wuz doin' up the work, Lucinda went to knittin' agin on that queer-lookin' thing as if she wuz in a hurry, and she told me that Bizer had business in Michigan and had to go, and that the rich old bachelor in Detroit that Julian wuz named for had writ to have him come and see him.

Sez Lucinda: "If it wuzn't for my boy's expectations I wouldn't let him stir a step without me, and," sez she, "I wuz so afraid that Julian would git run over by the cars I am goin' to have 'em go by water."

"But," I sez, "hain't you 'fraid he'll fall overboard?"

"Oh, no," sez she, "for I have made Bizer promise that he will put a strap round Julian and fasten it to his belt. I am knittin' the strap now," sez she, and she held up that queer-lookin' concern; it wuz a yard and a half long and three inches wide, knit out of stout linen cord.

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I see that Julian couldn't git away; it would hold him.

"But," I sez, "wouldn't it be better to learn Julian to be cautious and careful and go free?"

"Oh, no!" sez she, "he's never gone free a minute in his life; when I take him to town I always lead him through the streets, and in meetin' I always have him set between Bizer and me so's nothin' could happen to him."

"There couldn't much happen to him in meetin'," sez I.

"No," sez Lucinda, "I don't spoze so, but I've always wanted to be on the safe side."

"I spoze so," sez I, "but has Julian always been willin' to do as you wanted?"

"Oh, no!" sez Lucinda, "he is a very active child naturally, and so venturesome; I don't know what would become of him if I didn't watch him every single minute. He throwed himself and kicked only a few weeks ago right in meetin', because I would lead him up the aisle."

"Well, what hurt would have come to him if you had let him walk alone in the meetin'-house?"

"Well, I don't really know, but I felt safer

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to have holt of him; of course children have fell and broke their noses, and they have got into the wrong seat—anyway, I felt safer. Now, nights I never feel safe till I tack him in bed.”

“Tack him!” sez I wonderin’ly.

“Yes,” sez she, “tack the bedclothes down to the bedstead. I used to pin ’em down, but he’s got so strong now he jest kicks and ram-pages round so I have to tack him; I’m so afraid that he’ll git the clothes off and git cold.”

“Why,” sez I, “if the room is comfortably warm it don’t seem as if there is much danger. I spoze you do it after he has said his prayers?”

“Oh,” sez she, “I’ve give up tryin’ to make him say ’em, because he uses such voyalent language at me while I’m tackin’ him. I felt that I couldn’t have him go from prayers to profanity.”

“Why,” sez I, “Thomas J. never missed his prayers once when he wuz a child, and he keeps it up now, his wife sez. I have thought that wuz one reason that made him such a good man, but I never thought of tackin’ him into bed. He went quite free from a child. Why,

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before he wuz Julian's age we let him go fishin' alone. And we'd let him go horseback alone for quite a little ways; of course he would promise us that he'd only go so fur, and he always did as we told him, and in that way he learnt to be careful. He fell off the horse once or twice at first, but Josiah wuz nigh by, and we thought it would be better to let him learn to take care of himself whilst we wuz round. He learnt caution and self-reliance, and before he was as old as Julian he could be trusted to go anywhere."

"Mercy! I wouldn't have Julian on a horse's back for all the world. Supposin' the horse should prance?"

"Why, learn him to hold on; that's what we did."

"Julian would be as likely to start for the village as anywhere; he would run away the minute he wuz let free."

"Well, we learnt Thomas J. to not disobey us, and givin' him so many privileges he didn't have to deceive us to git away; he felt that he wuz on his honor and did as we told him."

"Well, Julian wouldn't," sez Lucinda. "I

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remember once he got away from me when I wuz leadin him into meetin', and he run more'n a mile. Bizer had hard work to ketch him, and after that we both led him. He's been real hard to manage; he's always wanted his own way."

"Well," sez I, "don't you think that up to a certain extent he ort to have it? We all have bodies and souls of our own, and different minds and wishes. We can't all think alike or act alike, and up to a certain extent we ort to have our freedom."



"BIZER, A MEEK-LOOKING MAN"

"Oh, my! I should faint away if I thought Julian had his freedom. Why, I shouldn't sleep a wink while they wuz on their journey if I didn't know he wuz strapped to Bizer. But Bizer has promised on the New Testament to not let him loose a minute till the boat reaches Detroit."

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Bizer, a meek-lookin' man with a high bald head, spoke up here and sez: "Yes, I promise, Lucinda."

"But," sez I, "Julian will have to git along by himself some time. He can't go through life strapped to his father."

"Oh, well," sez Lucinda, "when he gits of age he will have to go freer."

"But," sez I, "if anything should happen to you and Bizer Julian will have lots of money, and it will be hard on him if he hain't learnt to have any self-control and self-reliance."

But I hadn't much time to remonstrate for it wuz most night when we got there, and Bizer and Julian started early in the mornin' for the boat, Julian lookin' cross as a bear settin' between Bizer and the hired man, so's not to fall out of the buggy, and the strap in his Pa's pocket ready to apply it to him the minute they reached the boat.

Well, Lucinda's eyes looked red at breakfast, and she worried some for fear that his Pa wouldn't fasten the strap tight enough and he would slip through. But the thought of Bizer's New Testament oath comforted her some, and she brightened up and begun to control little

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Luella Lucinda. Why, if she said, "Luella Lucinda, don't!" once durin' them two days and nights she said it five hundred and eighty times, and I hain't settin' it too high. Why, good land! I have sometimes thought I had seen a mouse watched clost by a cat, but no mouse was ever watched as that mother watched that child. If Luella bit a' apple on one side it wuz: "Luella, don't; don't bite in so fur; you'll break off your teeth." If she dranked a glass of water it wuz: "Luella, don't swaller such big mou'fuls of water, or you will fill your little throat too full." And if she dranked slower it wuz: "Swaller faster, Luella, or the water will run all over your little chin."

And so it went on until I got so wore out with it one evenin' that I up and told Cousin Lucinda what I thought of it, about the on-reason of her actions, and finally I brought up a deep simely I had hearn my mother use. Sez I: "As it has been said, and well said, 'Watched pot never biles,' which I spoze means that if you watch a kettle too clost, and keep a-movin' it back and forth and pokin' the coals under it, it won't bile. There is such a thing as a wise caution, a' overlook that don't annoy or disturb,

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sort o' distant and yet near at hand, some as the poem runs, 'Thou art so near and yet so fur,' soothin' and comfortin' like. But this constant taggin' after a child and naggin' is enough to spile any child whatsoever; it spiles its disposition by keepin' it riled up all the time; it teaches it to be dependent on somebody else; it keeps the child from havin' any self-control or judgment of its own."

"But," sez Lucinda, "I don't want my children to have any judgment of their own; I can't let 'em move off independent of me; I can't."

And then I sez with a sort of a deep look: "You'll have to, Lucinda, in the end; you'll have to loosen the reins and leggo, and the kindest thing you can do now is to help 'em to help themselves; let 'em have their own way a little mite; let 'em learn to walk alone."

"But," sez Lucinda, "I want 'em to go my way always. I don't want to let 'em go alone."

But I shook my head sadly and sez agin: "You'll have to, Lucinda, you'll have to; every human soul can't be helped only jest so fur. Lonely they come into the world, lonely they will go out of it, and all along through life the lonesome soul, though surrounded by watch-

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fulest relatives and friends, yet in a certain sense it has got to live alone, dwell by itself in the deep places where no eye can foller it, no ear hear what it sez; no one but the One who made that soul, made the deep places in which it hides itself.

“Now, that individual, independent life has its rights; it must have 'em, it is a separate bein'. Mothers don't want to think so, but it is. A mother wants to take the hull child, clothes and all, and put it right in the middle of her own heart, and keep it there safe from all evil; but she can't, her heart hain't big enough; or she may want to git right inside her child's heart and fill it full, so full that nothin' else can git in, weighin' as she duz over two hundred; but she can't, she is too big.

“The best love, the truest and the tenderest, has to kinder hang round on the outside; it can't git inside of the beloved heart and soul, it can't. It is a lonesome feelin' to contemplate, but it is true. And so what remains for anybody to do is to admit the fact, own up that the little soul hain't a part of our own life, but has a separate life of its own, with its own duties, pleasures, cares and rights. It has'a right

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to its own little thoughts and ways, its own little likes and dislikes, and the best we can do is to teach it to stand alone and stand straight. No matter how much we love to have it lean on us; and oh, how passin' sweet it is to have the little fingers cling to ours, and the little form lean on our loving hearts; but we must put self back of us, we must stand in front of ourselves, as it were, and do right, learn the little creeter to walk upright without our help. We must once in a while leggo of the little, dimpled hands, leavin' 'em free to grab holt of duty. A tough lesson for mothers to learn, one of the toughest and hardest, but it is right."

Sez Lucinda dreamily: "He promised not to leggo; he promised on the New Testament."

And then I see that her thoughts had wandered to Julian, little voyager on the deep, strapped to his Pa, but I continued: "Good land! talk about educatin' a child; why, if a mother is a true woman, a true mother, the child educates her more than she educates the child, enough sight. She learns a divine patience through bearin' with the childish faults. She learns a divine courage from her love that will face all dangers, and for its sake smile at



'HE PROMISED ON THE
NEW TESTAMENT''

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Satan's rage and face a frownin' world. She mounts up on the hite of self-abnegation and martyrdom when she learns it to git along without her, like a' old bird pushin' her young one out of the nest so it may learn to fly. Oh, how that old bird would love to keep it in the warm, sweet nest; how her love wants to brood over it always; how she yearns to keep it clost to her own jealous, beatin' heart. How doubly lonesome the old nest is when the little one is gone; how happily sad and joyously mournful is the thought that it is learnin' to fly alone, learnin' to be happy away from her, away from the old nest—that the home nest can never agin, as of old, be the bound of its joy and content. No, the wide horizon has dawned on it, the clear fields of ether, and it must soar away and sing its own songs, build its nest, live its life in its own world."

Agin sez Lucinda: "If the strap don't break Julian is safe."

And then I see there wuz no use to eppisode any more at that time, and I wound up my knittin' and eppisodin' and went to bed. But ever and anon, as I found opportunity I advised Cousin Lucinda for her good, but don't

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know as it did much good; you can't give good advice three times a day in a little sweetened water like pikery. No, you have to hang round and administer it the best you can, and where you can, and when you can; and then you hain't sure that it is swallered.

I felt considerable sad as we driv away, Luella and her Ma standin' on the piazza, for I hearn Cousin Lucinda say: "Don't set down on your little new gown, Luella, or you will muss it all up;" and a minute after, jest as we went round a corner of the house, I hearn her say: "Don't stand up so much, little Luella Lucinda, or you will break off your little ankles."

I felt deprested and sithed hard, and I should have sithed harder had I known of the dark shadder that wuz a-hangin over Lucinda so soon to fall. But the news come to us in a few days. Bizer had kep' his oath strict, had strapped Julian to him, and all the voyage he had had only the length of the strap to career round in, and bein' a active child he had rebelled and made his Pa's trip a sad and queer one.

But jest as they reached the pier Bizer, honest man, had to let Julian loose a minute to tend to his baggage, and that one minute of liberty

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Julian used, nobody knows how, or ever will. 'Tennyrate from that day to this he has never been hearn from; he disappeared from the face of the earth as if he had never been—he and the strap. It wuz spozed that never havin' been allowed to go nigh the edge of the vessel, and not knowin how fur he could lean over safely, he leaned over too fur and went under the boat, and wuz carried off by some undercurrent that always flows for the onprepared and oncautious.

“Poor little creeter!” I sez as I read it, and the tears jst flowed down my face. And then in a minute after I sez: “Poor little Luella Lucinda!” thinkses I, what will your freedom move be if you ever do break loose? And I felt dubersome about her, dretful dubersome. It wuz most night when we hearn the news about little Julian. Josiah naterally has a tender heart and he wuz so affected and wrought up I well remember I had to git out that precious scrap-book and read him two of them truthful and comfortin' incidents which I knew would be soothin' to him because he could scorf and make light of 'em.

Of course he did that as usual. I guess he

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felt he had to, but I could see that he wuz all quieted down, and he slep' that night like a babe, much better than I did.

The incidents I read wuz as follers, they had happened to near and dear friends of mine and wuz as true as the gospel verses writ over 'em by my own right hand.

CHAPTER XII

The Young Girl's Search for Her Father

"And the Lord went before them to lead them the way."

A PROMINENT author and philanthropist was in her early girlhood the close companion of her father in a far-away western mining camp. They were congenial comrades as well as greatly attached father and daughter, and in their lonely life in the depths of the Rockies, amongst the rough and uncongenial society about them they were inseparable companions.

Professor C., her father, (professor of geology) was obliged to leave the camp and go on quite a long journey, leaving his daughter very lonely without him and counting the days to the one set for his return.

On that day, long before the hour she could reasonably expect him, she climbed the rocky height from which the trail could be seen leading into the unbroken forest, from the depths of which she expected to see the well beloved form emerge.

THE YOUNG GIRL'S SEARCH

She watched and waited there till the shadows of the tall mountains closed in and shut out the view.

The next morning early she was in the same place and watched throughout the day, hoping every minute to see the desire of her eyes. But again dark shadows fell over the wild wastes and darker still over her heart.

The third day the rough miners who had tried to keep up her courage, by recounting the many things that might have delayed him, began to share her fears, for there were lawless Indian bands prowling about and it was exceedingly dangerous to leave the camp alone.

That day the miners set out in search of him, and the young girl, who was a fearless horsewoman, insisted on going with them. They were unwilling she should do this, for she was the pet of the camp, and they dreaded her running into danger. But when they saw the white anxiety of her face, and the trouble in her big gray eyes, they could not forbid her going.

But when they were all mounted ready to start upon the trail, which they surely expected he would take on his return journey, for it was

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in this way he took his departure, to the surprise of all and her own as well, after going a short distance upon this path she had watched so anxiously for the past two days, the young girl insisted upon turning directly about and going in the opposite direction.

To all their objections and inquiries she could give no reason for thus changing her course and going in this new way, only she felt that she *must* go. When they asked her to tell her reasons she said:

"I do not know any reason, only I know I *must go* this way."

They were too much alarmed about Professor C. to spend too much time in argument, and as the young maiden had always had her way, and the rough miners were really her willing slaves, they let her do as she wished, thinking she would soon tire of her lonely pilgrimage and go back to camp, and they dashed onwards in pursuit.

Left to herself the young girl urged her horse onward in the opposite direction because she had to. She did not try to reason with herself, for she could not give any reason. But had she known it this young girl was as well

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fitted to reason on the subject as the greatest philosopher or scientist.

For she was dwelling now in the Domain that lies above the realm of Reason, that misty and dim region of which we catch faint glimpses when our need arises. When the blinding shadow of earthliness is wiped from our eyes by the hand of Sorrow, and when our struggling soul stretches out its unseen wings and rises above what we call the Actual, into that which is in truth the great Reality.

Who shall deny that the same great Power that led His people through the swelling waves and the wilderness led this lonely, sorrowful little girl as she galloped on and on in the deep dark shadows of the towering Rockies, through gloomy, cliff darkened canyons, and heavily wooded wastes, and along narrow, dizzy paths by the side of steep, precipitous cliffs.

The same Power upheld her, the same light went before her that went before His chosen people, only the light now guided her heart and soul. Her horse did not stumble and drag her down hundreds of feet into death. For as it is written of one of the Lord's children:

"I will hold him up lest he dash his foot against a stone."

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The savages did not sweep down upon her from the depths of some lonely gulch, for it is promised:

“Thou shalt not be afraid of the terror by night nor the arrow that flieth by day.”

The Angel of the Lord went before her, the angel of Help who is called to us by the strong appeal of earthly weakness and agony.

So on and on in rocky defiles and forest gloom she urged her trusty horse. She did not try to reason with herself, or even wonder at what she was doing, but onward, onward, for mile after mile did she pursue her lonely and dangerous way till fully twelve miles were traveled by her.

Then suddenly she came to her father, whose horse had fallen with him. She came to him just in time to give him the help he needed, and to save his life.

Sez Josiah, “Girls are deep. That girl knowed where he wuz all the time. She laid out to fool ’em all. I persoom he had telegrafted to her on the sly or telephoned, and wuz hidin’ away jest for a joke on the miners. I’ve hearn they wuz great cases to joke out there in the minin’ countries.”



"OUT THERE IN THE MININ' COUNTRIES"

SAMANTHA VS. JOSIAH

“How could you find a telephone and telegraph hundreds of miles from civilization?”

“Well, she might have sent a carrier dove ahead of her, or a—a hen,” sez he weakly and hastily, as he see my dretful onbelievin’ look.

“A hen!” sez I. “That looks likely; how could a hen go ahead of a gallopin’ horse for twelve milds?”

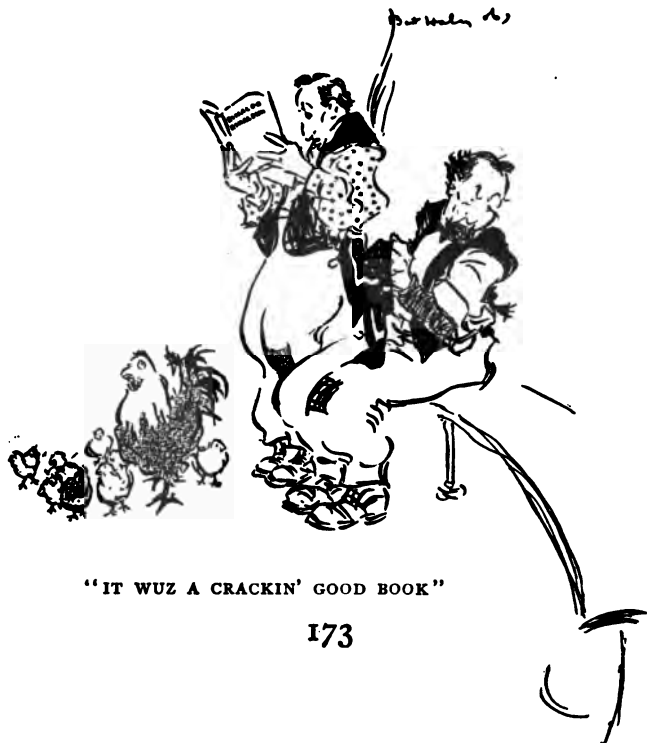
“Oh I’ve known hens to fly quite a ways, and you have, too, when you’ve tried to shoo ’em out of the garden; they’ve flowed milds and milds and you after ’em, and they kep’ right there in the end, settlin’ right down there agin on the same strawberry bed; I’ve seen ’em many a time. I’ve watched you havin’ strange experiences with ’em, Samantha, a holdin’ up your dress skirt and shooin’ ’em one way and they floppin’ right under your arms, and laughin’ you to scorn if a hen may be said to laugh,” sez he.

Sez I, “Josiah, you can’t lower this great subject by talkin’ about a hen’s laughin’. To me it is one of the most inspirin’ and beautiful things I ever hearn on. How this young girl, led by the power of the Most High and drawed by the gold chord of her love wuz led to her father’s side.”

THE YOUNG GIRL'S SEARCH

"Yes," sez Josiah, "we have hit it now; it wuz some string that drew her. Mebby he'd left a string in the road for her to see and fol-ler. I remember readin' sunthin' of the kind in 'Rinaldo Rinaldino, or The Stolen Maiden of the Alps;' the book Deacon Bobbett and I shed tears over."

"Yes, I know," sez I sithin', "and I never blamed you for weepin' over it, for it wuz enough to draw tears from a soap-stun."



"IT WUZ A CRACKIN' GOOD BOOK"

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“Yes, Samantha, you do have quite a good deal of good judgment when you use it; it wuz a crackin’ good book.”

So seein’ that it wuz no use to argy any more I subsided into silence and Josiah went out happy to do his barn chores. And I sot in my kitchen alone, yet not alone, for Great Ideas kep’ me company. And I looked off onto the western skies, beneath which this beautiful incident had took place. I looked out at that glowin’ sky, and thought of a good many things.

CHAPTER XIII

"She Wuz Big Feelin' and Actin'"

*"He worketh signs and wonders in heaven
and in earth."*

A WELL known writer of religious music, as well as an exceptionally sweet singer, after a very severe illness, had entirely lost her voice. After a long wandering in different climates in search of her lost health, she found herself in the far south.

This lady was particularly fond of the church organ, and as there was one in a nearby church, the clergyman gave her willing permission to play upon it all she wanted to.

One day when she was playing the clergyman of the parish entered the church, and after listening to her music for a while he laughingly told her that she must play and sing in his church the next Sabbath to pay for the use of his organ.

But she said, "I cannot sing a note and haven't for two years."

But he urged her to try her voice, and to her

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great surprise she could sing as well as she ever could.

The clergyman was much gratified, of course, and again assured her that he should expect her to sing in his church.

She asked him what the text was to be, for she told him she never could sing unless the words of the hymn fitted the subject of the sermon.

He said his subject was to be, "The presence of the Lord with His people."

She went home wondering what she should sing. As she went into her room at the hotel she saw lying on the floor a little slip of newspaper verses. Taking it up she read its title: "Surely I will be with thee."

The words, so appropriate, rang in her ears. She sat down to her little organ that always accompanied her in her journeyings, and the music seemed to come to her spontaneously to fit the words, and it was all finished by the Sabbath, and she played it on the organ and sang it to the great pleasure of the people.

On making inquiries where the little slip of verses could come from, she found that it was published in a religious newspaper nineteen

“SHE WUZ BIG FEELIN’ ”

years before and she had probably cut it out and preserved it, altho she had no recollection of doing so.

It was quite understandable how she could have kept it had she been in her own home, but when she was on a journey for health, and with no thought that she should be able to sing, why those verses should have appeared to her at that time, fitting in as they did at that very time to her need, seemed to her a beautiful proof of divine love and care.

Sez Josiah: “That woman had it in her pocket all the time and naterally when she went into her room and took some of her finery out, that dropped out on the floor.”

Sez I, “Is it likely a woman would carry poetry in her pocket nineteen years? Why, it would have been worn to rags by that time, and she said she had no idee where it come from.”

“Well, do you spoze folks do know half the time what they have in their pockets? Why, lots of times even I, a man, with a man’s strength of intellect, can’t jest remember what I have in my different pockets.”

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And to convince me that he wuz speakin' the truth, he commenced at once to take out of the pocket of his frock a red and yeller bandanna handkerchief, a old file, some screws, a handful of nails, a snarl of linen cord, a



leather belt and a piece of sponge, some tacks of different sizes, and a gimlet.

"There," sez he, triumphantly, "you see nobody knows what they have in their pockets. I wouldn't drempe' of what I had in mine. I've looked

for that gimlet high and low for some

**"YOU SEE NOBODY KNOWS WHAT THEY
HAVE IN THEIR POCKETS"**

months, and gin it up for

lost. I never drempe' I wuz carryin' it round with me all the time I wuz lookin' for it. I am so glad, Samantha, I have had it in my power to explain it all out to you so you'll rest easy in your mind. It wuz in her pocket."

Sez I, "Josiah, do you remember the old woman's excuses that didn't want to lend her

“SHE WUZ BIG FEELIN’ ”

wash-tub? She said it wuz too big; she had loaned it to another neighbor, and it leaked, and had been lost for months, and to end up she said she hadn't any wash-tub. Wimmen don't have pockets now. You have hearn me mourn over that enough; we don't have 'em.”

“That is so, Samantha; I fully agree with you as to that.”

Josiah continued: “If wimmen wuzn't so tarnal foolish and weak-minded they'd make a stand aginst havin' their dresses made without pockets, or if they do have 'em, put in such out-of-the-way places no human bein' can git to 'em, let alone a weak-minded woman.

“More fools you if you don't!” sez he, leanin' back boastfully, and even arrogantly, with his hands thrust deep into two voluminus pockets. “Uncle Sime and I wuz on the street car the day we went to the State Fair, and a woman got on the car dressed up as gay as a peacock. Her hands wuz girted down in kid gloves so little they didn't seem to have any strength to hold anything. But she wuz carryin' a gold top umbrell, six or seven packages, some papers, a veil, a card-case and a little bag with a long gold chain.

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"She wuz very big feelin' and actin'; her little thin nose wuz right up in the air and she drewed her ruffled and frizzled skirts round her as if the touch of us common folks contaminated her.

"When the conductor asked her for her fare she looked through the little bag, and while doin' that she dropped her umbrell and card-case. She couldn't find any money and riz up droppin' the packages, papers, and bag in the operation, and put her hand behind her and seemed to be rubbin' her back.

"The conductor seemed to be a kind-actin' man and most probable he had a pardner that enjoyed poor health. He waited quite a few minutes whilst she kep' rubbin' away, her face growin' redder and redder. And then he sez in a pittyin' axent:

"'Is it the rumatiz, or eczema?' and he went on in a real friendly and pittyin' way:

"'I don't want to distress you or hurry you, but when you git through rubbin your back I would like your fare,' and he added, 'my wife has tried Buckley's linement, good for man or beast; mebbly that would relieve you some.'

"She looked scornful, and her little nose

“SHE WUZ BIG FEELIN’ ”



“MY WIFE HAS TRIED BUCKLEY'S
LINEMENT ”

seemed to be lifted up higher than ever if that could be did, but redder than a beet, and her hull face wuz, as she said:

“ ‘I’m lookin’ for my pocket, but I can’t find it.’

“So the end wuz she had to git offen the cars

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a dribblin' packages and papers clear to the side-walk. There hain't no sense in such doin's," sez Josiah, startin' out doors.

"That is true, Josiah," sez I. "I've always thought so. But that hain't what we wuz talkin' about."

But Josiah was half way to the barn.



"SHE HAD TO GIT OFFEN
THE CARS—A DRIBBLIN'
PACKAGES"

CHAPTER XIV

Deacon Cobb's Forgiveness

It wuz the afternoon on December 24th, and a lovely day. It wuz considerable cold, yet a soft, shinin' haze seemed to enwrap Jonesville and the adjacent world. And like that luminous sunshiny glow did the sperit of Christmas, most blessed of days, linger and brood on the peaceful yet inspirin' air.

Josiah had been fur cleverer than usual durin' my week of almost stiddy cookin', and I'd seen him sarahuptishusly carryin' a new mop-stick, a streaked-handle broom and a shinin' tin potato-smasher into the horse-barn, so I knowed he had provided holiday presents for the pardner he so devotedly loved. And I myself seemed to be sort of riz up in sperit and almost saturated with the influences of the season even whilst my hands and mind wuz hard at work. It takes mind, lots of it, and strength of arm to make fruit-cake and mince pies, etc., etc., such as mine are.

Sister Bobbett had come hurryin' over that

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mornin' to borry some citron and biled cider, for she had got belated with her mince pies. All her children wuz comin' home the next day, and she wuz jest wild with happy excitement. Poor thing! my mince-meat wuz all made and ripenin' in glass jars in the store-room a month before. But I didn't humiliate her by speakin' on't, for it hain't everybody that has a faculty.

Our children wuz comin' home Christmas, and they well know nothin' is too good for their ma to put before 'em that day. Everything I could cook beforehand wuz done, and my buttery shelves would have groaned most probable, if they hadn't been sot in so tight. A noble big turkey all ready to roast hung in the store-room, and two ducks and two male hens flanked it on both sides. And I wuz jest standin' in the door between the buttery and store-room, admirin' the two beautiful views, when Josiah come in, and sez he (the sight of vittles always makes him cleverer), "My dear Samantha, this is a fur different seen from what I jest see down to Tom Tracey's. I stepped in there to git my auger, and I could cried when I looked 'round. You know Tom hain't been able to work the last few weeks. He wuz

DEACON COBB'S FORGIVENESS

jest creepin' 'round to-day tryin' to work a little. They have spent durin' his sickness all their little savin's—you know his work is all they have to depend on since he lost his propety—and I believe they have got down to their last crust."

"My land! my land!" sez I, sinkin' into a kitchen chair.

"Yes," sez Josiah, "I could have cried, if it hadn't been for breakin' down my manhood, as I see the poverty-struck looks. Anna wuz tryin' to fix up sunthin' to put in little Harry's stockin'; child-like, he had hung it up a'ready. The stockin' wuz most beyond mendin'; it had been patched so all over. And Anna wuz finishin' a pair of little mittens she had made out of old cloth, and I see a few frost-bitten apples on the mantelry-shelf that I guess she wuz goin' to put in. Not a toy, not a piece of candy even, and he bright as a dollar and rightful heir to a big propety. It's a burnin' shame!"

"Well," sez I, "one thing I will do; Anna nor Tom can't object to that. I will send down a basket of candy and fruit and some of the chidren's old toys to Harry, poor little thing! To think of all the mountain-loads of toys that

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are piled up waitin' for happier little ones this night, and that poor child with nothin' but a half-frozen apple and a pair of old cloth mittens! I shall send 'em right away."

But Josiah sez, "It would take more than toys to make 'em comfortable. Why, Samantha, I don't believe they have got a thing to eat in the house, or a stick of wood. I didn't see any. It wuz cold as Greenland, and Tom ought to have every comfort if he is ever to git well. They wuz wrapped up in old clothes, and Harry wuz abed, I believe to keep him warm. He wuz cryin' 'bout sunthin', and Anna looked as if she had cried her eyes out. Tom looked like death, and I don't know what to do. I don't know but they would starve and freeze before they would ask for anything or complain."

"Oh, dear me! dear me!" I groaned agin, deeper than any banquet-table ever did (accordin' to report). "To think on't. Anna Cobb sufferin' for things, and her pa livin' alone with that cross, slack housekeeper of hisen, and rollin' in riches."

"And rumatiz," sez Josiah.

"Yes, I dare say he rolls some with that. He enjoys poor health, I hain't a doubt on't.

DEACON COBB'S FORGIVENESS

And sometimes I think that onforgivin', aggravatin' sperit of hisen strikes in and makes him in more pain than he naterally would be. Howsumever, if our failin's all struck in, there would be considerable sickness in the community. But it is a turrible thing, and makes me most sick to think on't."

"Yes," sez Josiah; "but Anna knowed what her pa wuz and ort to calculated on't."

Sez I, "There never wuz a better young man livin' than Tom, and he wuz well off and able to support a family till he lost his proppety, and Anna has been happy with the man she loved till he wuz took sick. And little Harry, dear child! I should thought that would melted the old man's onforgivin' sperit, that sweet little boy named for him. But dear me, I don't know what we can do. Anna and Tom are so proud. But we can't let 'em die right here in our midst. The idee of Anna Cobb, who had everything heart could wish, sufferin' for food this bountiful Christmas-time! Sunthin' has got to be done. I don't know but I'd better go and talk to her pa. I would in a minute if I thought it would do any good."

"Oh, he's worse to-day. I see the doctor

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drivin' away, and I see lots of the relations' teams hitched there. I don't know but the old scamp is goin' to leave us after all."

Sez I, "And that big, handsome proppety to go to his relations, and they all well off, and poor Anna sufferin' for everything. It don't seem as if I can stand it."

"Well, you'll probable have to stand it, and the Cobbses will tend to the proppety—they're a graspin' set, anyway."

"But the Deacon never agreed with any of 'em. They wuz always havin' fusses."

"I'd like to know who could agree with Harrison Cobb, unless they wanted to be sot on and scrunched down. Look at the way he treated me!"

"Yes, I know it, Josiah; he's dretful hash-spoken and aggravatin'. But," sez I, takin' down my hood and shawl, "I'm goin' over there and put in a word for Anna. Mebby the Christmas sperit that breathes through the atmosphere this blessed season may melt his old heart."

"I guess it will take more than wind to melt that old bugger's sperit," sez Josiah. But seein' me git ready, he added, "Hadn't you bet-



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ter take my old shotgun? I'd never dast tackle him 'bout Anna without bein' armed."

"I'd like my own pardner by my side to take care of me," sez I.

And to my great surprise, Josiah put on his coat and hat, and sallied out with me, sayin', "I hain't goin' to have you rush into danger, Samantha, without my bein' by your side." And he added, sort of soty-vosey, "He's bed-fast, so he can't hurt us only with his old tongue."

As we approached the big stun house we see lots of teams hitched to the fence, and every one, Josiah said, belonged to a Cobb. I knowed that in the first flush of his anger ag'inst Anna he'd changed his will, leavin' out his only child, and willin' all his big, handsome proppety to his brothers and their families, and so I thought that it wuz nothin' strange that in his sickness the Cobbses should gather 'round him.

We rapped to the settin'-room door, and it wuz opened by his tall, cross-eyed, humbly housekeeper, the Widder Pendergrast, who told us the first thing that Deacon Cobb wuz dretful bad, and wouldn't probable last much longer.

DEACON COBB'S FORGIVENESS

He lay in his big bedroom offen the settin'-room, and we hearn his voice, before we got into the house, soundin' kinder hoarse and shrill. And as he ketched sight on us, he hol-lered out, "There comes Josiah Allen! I wuz jest sendin' for you, Josiah Allen!"

My pardner wuz took back, seein' they hadn't hardly spoke to each other sence their hardness took place. But bein' kinder nudged forward by me, he went on through the room, most full of Cobbses, into the Deacon's bedroom. He wuz propped up on pillers, and the minute I see him I knowed he wuz dretful feverish, and it wuz that that gin him the strength to talk so loud, for I see he wuz a very sick man.

"Yes, I wuz goin' to send for you to forgive you. The minister wuz here yesterday. He preached a regular Christmas sermon to me, and said it wuz my duty to love and forgive my enemies, and so I thought of you, you old scamp, most the first thing! I hain't forgot how you gouged me in that hoss-trade, and fleeced me in that cow-deal, and how under-handed you wuz 'bout that line fence, and imposed on me. But I'm goin' to forgive you!"

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"I'll leave it to the hull of Jonesville," sez my indignant pardner, "if you didn't do the cheatin' yourself, and git the better of me in every deal. And I'll say so, Christmas or no Christmas, sickness or no sickness, and I don't want none of your forgiveness and won't have it!"

"You can't help it, you old coot you! I shall forgive you till

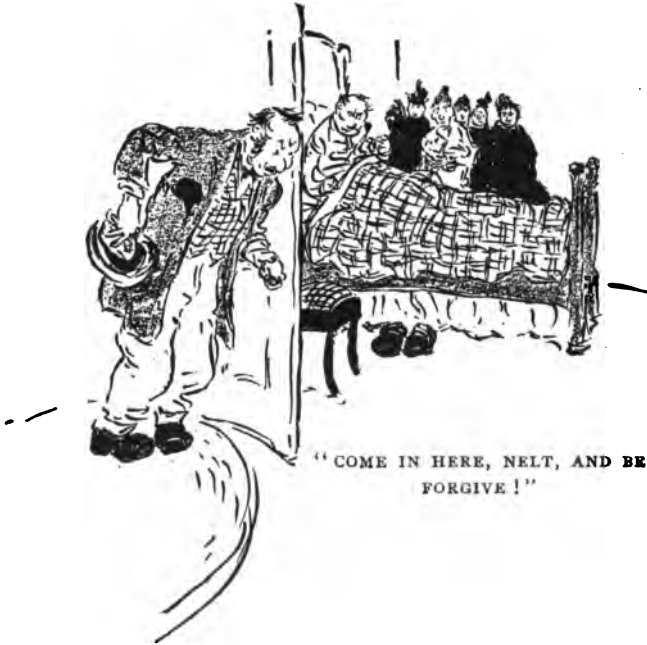
"That poor, lyin' slanderin' tongue
Lies silent in the grave."

I don't know but Deacon Cobb thought for a minute that he wuz in protracted meetin', and wuz tryin' to line off that old him, and got it mixed up; and I don't know but he meant it to impose on my pardner. But 'tennyrate, Josiah wuz jest crazy-mad, and wuz on the p'int of belchin' out agin. But I grasped holt of his arm and whispered to him "to humor him, for he wuz delirous." But I couldn't keep him demute. Sez he, "Delerious or not, I hain't goin' to be browbeat and called a thief and a robber by any live man."

But I whispered back, "He won't be alive long."

DEACON COBB'S FORGIVENESS

"Well joy to the world!" sez Josiah. And whether he, too, meant to quote a line of poetry or objurgate the Deacon, I don't know. And I can't tell what the next *contrary temps* would have been if Nelson Cobb, the Deacon's



nephew, hadn't come in jest that minute. He had had more trouble with him than any of the rest. I'd hearn that he did more to make trouble between the Deacon and Anna than

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anybody else, and he wuz considered fur too clost to be honest.

The Deacon yelled out to him, "Come in here, Nelt, and be forgive!"

Nelson kinder meached in, and stood by the bed, and the Deacon went on, in that same loud, hash voice, "A meaner, low-lived creeter never lived than Nelt Cobb has always been! He's lived on cheese-parin's and apple-cores, and squeezed every dollar till the eagle squawked. He's cheated me time and agin, and lied to me. But I hain't above forgivin' him. I forgive you, Nelt—that is, if I die, I do; if I live, the same old grudge holds good!"

Nelson looked mad enough to trounce the old forgiver right as he laid there helpless, and went out.

And then the Deacon ketched sight of Miss Pendergrast, and motioned for her to draw near, which she did. She looked real meachin' and kinder 'fraid, but she had wreathed her linement for the occasion with a dretful deceitful-lookin' smile, and had mojudated her voice till it sounded sickish, and sez she, "What can I do for you, dear Deacon Cobb?"

And he said, in that same loud, gruff voice,

DEACON COBB'S FORGIVENESS

“You hearn what the minister said last night, that I must forgive my enemies. And if ever I had an enemy, it is you, you old toothless, wall-eyed crane! You’ve cheated me out of my eye-teeth. You have supported your good-fornothin’ children and grandchildren out of my vittles, and if I’ve stood it with you, and eat dirt, it wuz because your bread wuzn’t quite so hard as brickbats and your beefsteak wuzn’t clear leather. But because I’m goin’ to forgive you I don’t want you to forgit that I’ve ketched you robbin’ my pork-barrel and hen-roost, and stood it because I couldn’t eat raw potatoes and meat, and had to have somebody. And don’t you spoze I know that for five years you’ve tried to marry me, when you might have known I’d ruther married a cross-eyed tiger! But that don’t hender me from forgivin’ you, you old shark. And I hope the elder will be satisfied now.”

Miss Pendergrast threwed her apron over her head and went out cryin’ hard, and sayin’ she wuz “never so abused in her hull life.” But I didn’t pity her much, for I’d hearn she wuz light-fingered and a poor housekeeper, and had wondered how the Deacon stood it with

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her. But when he wuz himself he wuz close-mouthed, and I thought mebbly he'd stood it, as he said, not knowin' how to better himself.

He noticed her cryin' and hollered out, in the same rough way: "Oh, cry away! Keep it up! The Cobbses have cried! I've been forgivin' Cobbses all the forenoon—a set of blood-suckers, the hull on 'em. I know what they wuz cryin' about. It wuz for fear I would git well. And when they found I'd tore up my will this mornin', they all cried harder than ever. But hang it all, I sot out to do the lovin' and forgivin' act, and I've done it. I've forgive the hull stinkin' caboodle on 'em. There hain't a Cobb from Zoar to Loontown but what has been forgive for once, 'tennyrate."

Oh, how strange and husky his voice wuz, and how wild and glassy his eyes looked. His hull linement looked delerious and bad, and I went up to him, and sez, "Sha'nt I put a cold cloth on your head, Deacon, and a hot-water bag at your feet. It might make you more comfortable."

"I don't want to be comfortable, and hain't time to. The doctor jest the same as told me my days wuz numbered, and the minister said

DEACON COBB'S FORGIVENESS

I must forgive my enemies. I told him there wuzn't anybody 'round here but what *wuz* my enemy, and if I forgive 'em at all I would forgive 'em in a lump, the hull kit and b'ilin' of 'em to once. But he argued that wuzn't the true Christmas sperit of love and forgiveness, and so I consented to love and forgive 'em separate. And I guess I've forgive twenty or thirty to-day and still there is room!" He hollered out, "Come on and be forgive!"

How loud his voice wuz, and how feverish and bloated his linement! I knowed he wuz more or less out of his head, and felt kinder guilty and as if I wuz takin' advantage of him, but my pity for Anna wuz such that I bent over him, and sez, "It is right to forgive, Brother Cobb; and while you are 'bout it, don't you want to forgive the one person on earth that loves you best, and would do everything in her power to help you and make you happy? Don't you want to forgive Anna and her husband?"

His face looked fairly skairful, so many emotions wuz writ on't, and I see the Cobbses and the housekeeper look mad as hens, but I went on, "And the little boy, Brother Cobb, that wuz named for you. He is the brightest

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little boy I ever see, and he looks like you; everybody sez so. Don't you want to send for 'em? Josiah will bring 'em here in a few minutes."

I wuz fearful agitated, my pulse most stopped beatin', but finally he broke out:

"Oh, yes, bring her on! Bring the hull family on! I hain't got a hour to live, most likely, and I may as well make a clean job on't. Fetch on the miserable sneak, and the poor ijiot girl he fooled. I am in a forgivin' sperit, I am!" And he sunk back kinder breathless, and lay middlin' quiet till they come in.

Anna and Tom stopped in the kitchen a few minutes, but the little boy walked right up to the bed, and took holt of his grandpa's hand.

"How-de-do, grandpa; I wish you merry Christmas!"

Deacon Cobb took holt of his hand, and held it, and jest that minute Tom and Anna come in. She wuz cryin', but Tom held his head up, though he wuz pale and wan.

"Hello, Anna, you come to be forgive, did you? You could leave me alone, to run away with a sneakin' chap that put you up to deceive your old father. But I can forgive you, I spoze.

DEACON COBB'S FORGIVENESS

I'm in the lovin' and forgivin' business to-day."

"I don't want you to forgive me, pa, if you can't forgive Tom. He is the best man, pa, and I had everything for my comfort till he wuz took sick."

"Took sick, wuz he? Well, I guess he can't give me any p'inters on sickness. I guess I've gone to pretty nigh the highest notch in that. But I spoze if I must, I must, and if I've got to forgive a villian that stole out of my house the hull kit and shootin'-match in the way of happiness, and left me to the mercy of that bald-headed old dragon, I spoze I can. I forgive you, Tom, you sneakin' thief you!"

His words wuz hash, but I whispered to Anna and Tom, "Don't mind his talk; he's out of his head." And I told 'em both, "Your duty is here. If your pa can be saved, it is only good nursin' that will do it." And I sez to 'em, kinder low, "I think he's been neglected and hain't had proper care."

It wuz kinder hard judgin' in me, but the will wuz made in favor of the Cobbses, and Miss Pendergrastses girl had married one on 'em, and if he had drifted out and left his propety I guess they wouldn't mourned much.

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And I sez to 'em, "He is more or less delerious, but see how tenderly he's holdin' little Harry's hand." And agin I sez, solemnly, "Anna and Tom, your place is here." And I drew up a easy-chair, and sot Anna down in it, and made Tom sit down on the lounge.

Well, the Cobbses and the Pendergrastses will never feel right towards me agin, but I can't help it. I believe it wuz in the way of duty, and it turned out jest right. After that day of forgivin' and delerious excitement the old Deacon collapsed, and went down to death's door. And whilst he wuz layin' there on the very door-step, Anna and Tom tended and nursed him, and it wuz their care, so the doctor told the Deacon, that saved him. Tom, with proper medicine and nourishin' food and warm rooms, got better every day, and he or Anna never left the Deacon night or day. One on 'em wuz with him all the time, or else some one they could trust, like my companion and me, or a few of the other Jonesvillians. We went in when we could, to give 'em a little rest. And when the Deacon begun to get better, he acted jest as dependent on 'em as a baby. He don't want Anna out of his sight, and sort o' leans on Tom's judgment, seemin'ly.

DEACON COBB'S FORGIVENESS

His sickness didn't exactly soften his brain, but made it sort of mushy and meller. He disremembers most everything in the past, and acts kinder babyish and childish—sets by the hour and plays marbles and jackstraws with Harry. He's no more trouble than a kitten, Anna sez. And she takes such good care of him, cooks such nourishin' things, and tends to him so faithful that the doctor thinks he will pick up agin, and be quite well in body, though he don't think he will ever be exactly himself agin, which Josiah sez is a "mercy to Jonesville and the world." I don't spoze Josiah will ever feel right 'bout bein' forgive by him, tho I tell him he ortn't to lay anything up.

The old house under Anna's care (she has a good stout girl, but tends to everything herself), looks like a different place—clean, cheerful, homelike and pleasant—and Tom makes the farm and dairy pay, and pay well. He and Anna are thought a sight on in the community. I love to neighbor with 'em.

Josiah sez to me as we driv by the handsome place, and our minds reverted to the past, "Well, Anna and Tom got their stockin's pretty well filled that Christmas eve."



"SETS BY THE HOUR AND PLAYS MARBLES."

DEACON COBB'S FORGIVENESS

And I sez, "Their present wuzn't to be compared to her pa's, for he got love, true unselfish devotion, and that is heaven's most precious gift, the greatest thing in the world."

"Yes," sez Josiah, complacently, "it has turned out first-rate. I did a good job that day."

But that's goin' milds and milds past the hitchin'-post. I sot out to tell what a time I had with Josiah the night after Deacon Cobb forgive him. I thought my soul, I never should git him quieted down so he could git a night's rest, he wuz so tearin' mad and excited.

No matter what subject I brung up; the tariff, cowcumber pickles, the peace conference, overalls, religion, unequitable insurance, the school-mom, the children, hens, ice-suckles, etc., nothin' I could say would hender him from belchin' out into almost profane talk about that—Deacon! No, I won't tell what names he called him; it hain't best. I want him well thought on.

I felt worried about him, and I hung on the tea-kettle before I ontied my bunnet strings and had a beautiful supper on the table before he got in from doin' his barn chores, creamed

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potatoes, briled lamb chops, delicious coffee, etc.

And I spoze that ameliorated his condition considerable. But I dassent have him go to bed and lay himself liable to night-mairs till I read to him some out of that invaluable scrap-book.

I had to read three of them true and thrilin' incidents, and as usual he seemed to forgit his troubles as I read and disputed each one on 'em jest as nateral as if nothin' had transpired that day to rile him up to his very depths.

CHAPTER XV

A Visit From a Dove

"A bird of the air shall carry the voice."

"Shall lead as with the voice of doves."

A GENTLEMAN whom I will call Rev. Dr. A., and whose word is beyond any doubt, related the following incident in his public life, which took place just as I narrate it.

He and another leading man were editors of popular publications, but they were opposed politically and were on the eve of a grave quarrel.

Their articles grew more and more sharp and cutting as their different views on political questions swayed them almost beyond their judgment. Both were great-hearted men and philanthropists, each seeking the best good for humanity. But in different channels their natures were swept along till it seemed that a great conflict must ensue which both of them knew would be disastrous to the many weaker brethren who hung upon their words and were led by their influence whither they listed.

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At last they met together for conference at the house of Rev. Dr. A.

Professor B. (we will give them these initials for convenience) made a speech more remarkable for plain speaking than for Christian forbearance, and Dr. A. as he spoke felt the old Adam, which is in us all, asserting itself and demanding satisfaction.

But Christian feeling was still stronger in him and he said to Professor B., fastening his eyes rather sternly upon him, as he felt the injury they were both on the eve of doing to the cause of Christ.

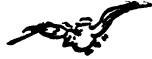
“Professor B., we can not afford to quarrel.”

Professor B. sat bolt upright with a stern resolute look on his face as if he were determined to not be moved or softened by anything Dr. A. could say.

But all at once the latter, while looking in his adversary's wrathful eye, saw it soften and an expression of wondering surprise take the place of its anger and sternness, and he seemed to be looking at something beyond Dr. A.

He turned to see what it was, and there behind him and over his head was a white dove.

A VISIT FROM A DOVE



"HE TURNED TO SEE WHAT IT WAS"

It bent its little head first to one side and then the other, lookin first at one of the men and then at the other with its soft bright eyes.

Where it came from they could not imagine. It was an upper chamber in a city house, and there was an open window in the room, but they did not see it enter. But there it was in its snowy purity like a visitant from another

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world, as if to remind them of the olive branch of peace and good will one of its kind once bore.

A little heavenly wanderer out of the blue heavens, as if sent to remind them of the trackless pathway it had traveled on unmarked by evil clamor or stones of malice and too violent partisanship, leading up to the home of Pure Love and Peace.

Dr. A. turned to Professor B. and said:

"I think we had better shake hands and be friends."

Professor B. stretched out his hand silently, and so the gulf of dissension that was opening between them closed up and they stood together with clasped hands, friends again.

And who may tell how much evil was averted from a too easily influenced generation by that little Heavenly Wanderer, which soon after flew away and they never saw it again.

Sez Josiah: "I don't take no stock in that dove bizness. That dove wuz most probable lookin' round for sunthin' to eat."

"It hain't common for 'em to fly into strange houses, in the city, too; you hardly ever see a pure white dove there."

A VISIT FROM A DOVE

“Most probable it had jest been washin’ itself down to the pump or somewhere.”

“Why did it happen to fly in there jest at that



time? Jest when its comin’ healed that angry discussion between two good men?”

“Well, it wuz probable because they wuz good. That dove most probable laid out before it went in there not to git hurt; most probable it looked in through the winder and sort

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o' liked their looks, and probable it wuz lookin' round for a good place to build a nest, and probable—."

"I don't want to hear another probable, and I hain't goin' to."

And I made up my mind that spozen' it wuz a dove that belonged to some boy or ruther that had flowed away over the house-tops free as the air and havin' a good time. It wuzn't more or less of a Heaven-sent meracle its flowin' in there jest at the moment it wuz needed to avert a quarrel that would have done so much injury to the cause of religion.

CHAPTER XVI

“Mebby They Picked Their Geese Down Suller”

“Be not afraid of sudden fear, for the Lord shall be thy confidence.”

“Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble and he saved them out of their distresses.”

A LOVELY souled woman, a member of the Methodist church, after many years of devoted Christian church work, felt called into a nearer and closer companionship with the Elder Brother.

She felt that Christians did not claim all the mercies and blessings that was right as children of the Divine Helper and Healer.

She prayed much for the child-like faith and trust that would take her Father at His word and possess her soul of the mercies and blessings He was so willing to grant to those who truly trust him.

And in answer to her prayers she felt the sweet assurance that she was in such close and

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beautiful communion with her Lord that she could trust Him fully, not only in the next world but in this, trust him to care for her bodily needs as well as her soul's salvation.

Some of her neighbors laughed at her child-like faith and trust, for she freely told of the way her Lord was leading her.

One night she was called with another lady to care for a sick neighbor. Both of these ladies had made some sport of what they called the too sanguine faith of Mrs. L.

During the evening Mrs. L. became a little chilly and went out to the kitchen stove to warm her feet.

Unknown to her a large trap-door was open in the floor, and she fell backward into the cellar. It was a long way to fall, and naturally the human in her was shocked and frightened as she felt herself going backward into what she might well have felt was her grave.

She struck the bottom stair so violently that several bones were fractured. When they first reached her she was in too violent pain to be moved. But an invalid chair was prepared as a stretcher, and the doctor raised her up carefully and laid her in it so they could take

“THEIR GEESE DOWN SULLER”

her to her home, only a few steps away. Her husband was sent for, and to show how terrible was the state she was in when he saw his wife lying there looking so much like death, he fainted.

After reaching her home, the doctor surrounded her with pillows and cushions trying to ease her terrible pain all he could, for her agony was intense and the doctor said that any change in her clothing that was necessary would have to be made then, as she would not be able to be moved at all for six weeks at least.

After the doctor and her friends had left her, her husband also went out of the room for a few minutes, and she was left alone, and she said to herself:

“Why, what have I been doing? I have been so confused by the shock and suddenness of my fall; why have I not looked to my Helper, the one who is able to heal all my infirmities?”

And she straightway asked her Lord to cure her of her agonizing pain.

She felt that her prayer was answered, and when her husband came into the room she told him.

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"I think I am healed. I have asked the Lord to cure me of my pain and He has heard me."

From that minute her pain ceased entirely; she had not a particle of pain or uneasiness from those bruised and splintered bones, and the third day she walked down stairs with no help.

Sez Josiah: "I believe that woman fell onto a feather bed."

Sez I, "How come a feather bed down there on the suller bottom?"

"Oh, there has been stranger things than that. Mebby they picked their geese down suller; some folks are so stylish."

"Who ever hearn of folks keepin' geese in a big city! that is perfectly absurd."

"Id'no as it is. 'Tennyrate you who are such a hand a believin' things you can't see, why can't you believe in some geese? Why can't you imagine two or three geese or ganders down there?"

"In dealin' with every-day common things, Josiah, you've got to use every-day common sense. And there hain't no sense in that idee and you know it."



"I BELIEVE THAT WOMAN FELL ONTO A FEATHER BED"

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“Oh, I’dno; geese *could* be kep’ there. They could drink to the pump and swim in the cis-



tern. It is most probable to me that she fell on feathers.”

I waved off that idee with the wand of silence and sez:

“Her bones wuz fractured, so the doctors said.”

“Oh, well, if you’re goin’ to believe everything that is told to you, you might jest as well give up first as last.”

“But why did the pain stop so sudden?”

“THEIR GEESE DOWN SULLER”

**“Oh, the doctor probable gin her sunthin’,
fetty or sunthin’ else.”**

**“The doctor did leave her some medicine,
but she never took the cork out of the bottle.”**

“Who sez so?”

“She did.”

**“Oh, well, I am glad and thankful *I* don’t
have to believe everything I hear.”**

CHAPTER XVII

The Miraculous Light

"He prayed unto the Lord and he spake unto him and gave him a sign."

"And those who were with him saw the light."

A CULTURED and wealthy couple who had married somewhat late in life, had one sweet daughter given them. She was an exceptionally beautiful young girl, highly endowed by nature and her mind and soul enriched by all means of education and culture, exceedingly conscientious and spiritual and devoted to good works, but not a member of any church, which was a great grief to her mother, who was a strict Presbyterian and born of a long line of orthodox ancestors.

This young lady in her beautiful youth was attacked by that terrible foe, consumption. Her agonized parents sought every means of help for her in this country and in Europe, but she grew worse steadily.

On their way home from abroad, the mother,

THE MIRACULOUS LIGHT

who saw her idol gradually fading away from her, in an agony, both on account of her body and her still more precious soul, made this vow to her Lord that if He would give her some sign that her child would be accepted and join the hosts of the redeemed she would be reconciled, she would be patient, she would not murmur.

Soon after this the young lady died as they were taking her to Florida. A message was sent to the mother's old home that she was coming back, bearing the body of her beloved child for burial among her kindred.

The old friends who knew and loved the mother, and knew how her very soul was bound up in this beautiful, only child, dreaded to meet her. They felt as if they could not witness her agony.

But she met them with a smile. Amazed at this, they feared for her sanity. But she said to them, as they stood by the casket looking down on the sweet face on which the hand of death had written his great meaning:

"You wonder, don't you, that I can smile as I stand here by the dead body of my only child? But you would not wonder if you knew

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how my darling died." And then she told them.

She said that on the day of her death she sank rapidly, and in the afternoon she asked her mother to lie down by her and take her in her arms. The broken-hearted mother did so, and then she said:

"Oh, mother, can't you hear that beautiful music? And oh, can't you see that beautiful place?"

But alas, the vision was too far off over earth's weary fields, and the ears that had to listen yet a long time to earth's discordant voices were held and could not hear the celestial harmonies, revealed to the weary pilgrim who stood at the gate of heaven.

And then she said, "There is grandma coming toward me." She had never seen her grandmother, but she knew her.

As she lay looking upward with wide spiritual eyes, a white light gradually became visible about her and wrapped her round.

The mother saw it. Her aunt who was traveling with them, came in and saw it also. And lastly their little waiting maid as she entered the room exclaimed in wonder:

THE MIRACULOUS LIGHT

“Oh, what is that light?”

It was like a white luminous cloud, like the purest, clearest light shining through alabaster, and it remained about her till her sweet soul passed away and the light passed away with it.

To the mother it was a divine answer to her prayer, to the vow she had made, a sign that her child was taken to be forever with the Lord.

As I finished readin' this true incident (for Josiah's good), I felt all roused up and by the side of myself.

But Josiah sez: “I'll bet you a cent it wuz the lamp-light shinin' on her, or a lantern goin' by the winder.”

“It wuz the middle of the afternoon, and it is usual, hain't it, to walk 'round with lanterns in the day time?”

“Well, somebody might have been carryin' a kerseen swab, killin' worms' nests in apple-trees, or hornets' nests or sunthin'.”

“Oh yes, very likely;” sez I sarcasticly, “in a street in a big city apple-trees abound, and hornets' nests are frequent and numerous, and

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“WELL, THERE MIGHT HAVE BEEN A
TORCH-LIGHT PROCESSION”

folks would naterally be promenadin’ ’round there carryin’ kerseen swabs.”

“Well, there might have been a torch-light procession.”

“Yes, right in the day time; that looks reasonable!”

“Well, argey and argey, it is the hardest thing in the world to beat common sense into wimmen’s minds; it tires a man out to try to.”

“I wouldn’t try then,” sez I. “You’ll most probable need all the common sense you’ve got for your own use. If you part with a speck on’t, Josiah, I’m afraid you’ll feel the loss.”

THE MIRACULOUS LIGHT

I then riz up with quite a good deal of dignity and went and put that scrap-book carefully back in the box in my buro draw, where I keep them precious dockuments, and shet it up tight. And tried to shet up my soarin' emo-



"I PUT THAT SCRAP-BOOK CAREFULLY BACK
IN MY BURO DRAW"

tions at the same time. I did shet my mouth. But as a neighborin' child once said and well said:

"I could stop my tongue, but I couldn't stop my Thinker."

CHAPTER XVIII

Josiah's Someway Saloon

ONE cold evenin' Josiah come in dretful fraxious. It wuz jest after the dretful Abe Meechim affair, and Jehial Gowdey had throwed Abe in his face and he wuz brow-beat and mortified.

And Id'no as I've ever told you of that affair. It wuz turrible, turrible! And tho Id'no as it is any more appropriate to fasten it to this book than it would be to hitch the old mair behind the democrat, and Id'no but it is as out of place as to hitch her to the outside of the wagon house; still, I guess I will branch out and tell it, because it goes to show what good reason my pardner had to be worked up and agitated in his mind.

And oh, it gauls me dretful to have to relate my pardner's shortcomin's and how he wuz carried away by his desires to be fashionable and make money at the same time, forgittin' the lessons he'd learnt from the old family Bible and his lovin' pardner.

JOSIAH'S SOMEWAY SALOON

But I'll tell it, now I've sot out to; mebbly it will do good, mebbly it will curb in some other man who wants to be genteel in a profitable way, and won't listen to their pardners. Oh, if it will make one single male pardner turn round in his tracts and listen to the voice of his faithful companion this truthful, tho harrowin' story, won't have been writ down in vain, nor in vain the veil have been lifted up so the public can see what dretful things stand ready to happen to a pardner that is stiff-necked and disobedient to his faithful consort.

I had noticed that Josiah wuz readin' the papers a sight and seemed to fall into deep thought anon or oftener, and I had seen him and Deacon Henzy out by the barn comparin' notes as it were, and then they would put their two bald heads together in a earnest symposium and wag their heads and argy, but both seemin' to be argyin' on one side, for they looked dretful congenial and self-satisfied.

I asked Josiah several times what it meant, but he told me it wuz political affairs too deep for wimmen to understand, which madded me some, but didn't squench my curiosity. And I kep' my eye on 'em one mornin' when they

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wuz settin' on the back steps and I see jest what paper and page it wuz they wuz so interested in, and after they laid it down to go to the barn, I see the name of the piece wuz:

"HOW TO PURIFY POLITICS"

It wuz the views of eminent clergymen and others and as nigh as I could make out the argument wuz that the way to keep a right Sunday wuz not to keep it at all, and the way to abolish intemperance wuz to let men have a chance to git all the whiskey they wanted every day in the week. To stop the awful effects of the saloon-keepers' bizness by makin' it respectable and him looked up to, and lots of such arguments which they seemed to think wuz powerful and convincin'.

And the piece that Josiah and the deacon seemed to gloat and pour over the most wuz the description of the saloon some well-meanin' folks had started to rent to God and Mammon, git pay from both and do well at it. But I knowed that these two could never become pardners, never; and could have told 'em so.

But they didn't ask my advice, but went on with it and had prayers and sam singin' and

JOSIAH'S SOMEWAY SALOON

drinkin' all together, prayin' I spoze that the Drink Demon would act different from his nater and singin' triumphant hims pretendin' it had.

But I knowed that wouldn't alter its nateral nater, and no sam that wuz ever sung in any meter whatsumever could make a drinkin' man anything but a danger and a disgrace to himself and the world. And I knowed that this saloon wuz encouragin' and stimulin' men and wimmen to drink, and if they didn't git enough in that spot to make 'em crazy drunk it whetted up their taste for it, and they could git it in any other saloon and would; the sams didn't make any difference with the nater of the stimulent, or the drunkard's insides.

And to say that to drink pious in the first place to the accompaniment of prayers and hims wuz safe and innocent wuz jest as foolish as to say that to start a fire in a powder-mill with the *Christian Evangelist* wouldn't do any harm. Good land! when the fire wuz started what difference did it make whether it wuz kindled with a religious paper or the *Police Gazette*? Fire will burn every time, and powder will explode and destroy. And

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there is a great gulf fixed between Right and Wrong, and when well-meanin' folks try to bridge that gulf and unite 'em and make 'em jine harmonious, it is like tryin' to walk over Niagara on a paper bridge. The flimpsey bridge is bound to fall under you, and the angry waves will dash you to pieces below.

I knowed how this pious saloon would come out in the end. The folks that started it, good natered I hain't a doubt, and good sam-singers, and able in prayer, but they had tackled too big a job; probable they would be willin to hear to me another time.

Havin' the feelin's I did about it I felt like takin' the paper by the tongs and throwin' it into the fire, but Principle held me back. But Josiah fell a victim to the arguments and his own desire to be stylish and fashionable, and I couldn't help it.

A few days after that Josiah said he'd hired a new man for the season, Abram Meechim. I wuz dumbfounded, knowin' Josiah wuz so petickular about his help, for Abe wuz a poor dissipated feller, who dranked up every cent he could git holt of, and his ragged, wretched family sufferin' for things. Many a basket of

JOSIAH'S SOMEWAY SALOON

food and clothin' I'd carried to 'em. And his wife confided in me that he misused her the worst kind when in liquor, tho he wuz good-hearted and used her well when he wuzn't under its influence. She'd told me many a time that Sunday wuz the only day now that he treated her half decent, for he couldn't git whiskey that day. I pitied her from the bottom of my heart.

She thought hirin' Abe wuz noble in Josiah. Sez she, "I feel so grateful to my Maker and Josiah Allen, to think he consented to hire Abram, for everybody knows what a firm-principled man Josiah Allen is." And she sez, "I do believe Abram will reform when he sees such a sample of good principle before him and can't git a drop of stimulant." Sez she, "All the men who have hired Abram are so low, givin' him drink and drinkin' with him, and jest draggin' him down. And there is so much in Christian example," sez she.

I love to hear the high virtues of my pardner extolled, but somehow I felt dubersome about this. And what wuz my horrow the very day before Abram come, to see Nate Murphy, the saloon-keeper in Zoar, onload two barrels

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of hard cider at our door, Josiah helpin' him. And he also handed out two or three big bottles of whiskey.

I wuz so smut with wonder and horrow you could knocked me down with a clothes-pin. Josiah never drinks a drop of hard cider, and as for whiskey, I didn't believe he knowed the taste on't. But they brought 'em onto the stoop, and when the man went out to his wagon agin Josiah locked arms with him as they went down the path to the gate.

Nate wuz a low, dissipated creeter, and had been the ruin of men and boys all round Zoar and Loontown, and Josiah never noticed him before. And there he wuz lockin' arms with him and leanin' tenderly on him, and talkin' with him like a brother.

I see Deacon Henzy approachin' and thinks I, how 'shamed I am to have a brother in the meetin'-house see Josiah consortin' with a man responsible for so much misery and degradation, and hain't no more conscience or shame than a soap-stun.

But Deacon Henzy rushed up to Nate and took his hand in both of hisen and overwhelmed him with joyous greetin'. And I hearn 'em



"I WUZ SO SMUT WITH WONDER
AND HORROW"

Austin Healy
1916

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both invite him warmly to visit 'em. Murphy looked sheepish and didn't promise. I guess he wuz astounded, and thought their sudden change of action wuz some sort of a trap for him, for he hastened away; Deacon Henzy and Josiah escortin' him to his wagon and tuckin' the robes around him and wavin' their hands to him as he drove away.

And then Josiah and Deacon Henzy leaned against the dooryard fence and talked and talked, and anon Deacon Henzy took a paper out of his pocket and they both looked it over and read as if it wuz so much gospel. I put on my far-offs and could see plain by the big headin' on it that it wuz another of the papers Josiah had been gloatin' over for the past few days containin' that eloquent speech by the famous clergymen, intimatin' that the prayerful works of the temperance wimmen wuz the work of the devil, etc., and admonishin' the readers to make the saloon-keeper's bizness respectable, and tellin' the advantage of givin' drunkards the privilege of gettin' all the whiskey they wanted openly so they wouldn't be tempted into the wickedness of gittin' it on the sly.

JOSIAH'S SOMEWAY SALOON

And it contained a high-flown speech on the terrible injustice of compellin' a beer drinker to git his drink Saturday night. And tho they didn't say it in so many words, the meanin' wuz of how little consequence our holy Sabbath wuz when weighed in the balances of this terrible inconvenience of the beer drinker. And it called on all noble and loyal citizens to rally to his relief and help him git it on Sunday as he ort to, and help make drinkin' respectable and well thought on.

I read it and felt like death about it, for I knowed that wuz what had fired Josiah up and led him to git the stimulant.

And sure enough, that wuz jest what he said when I atted him about it. Sez he, "I'm goin' to help make drinkin' respectable. I'm goin' to purify politics. You see jest as plain as I do that it is genteel to treat the drink traffic in this way; let it be sold open and above board; make the saloon bizness honorable and him looked up to—make it pious. Deacon Henzy and I have read all the eloquent speeches in favor on't and we're converted. We're both pious, dum pious to start with, and we're goin' to foller this right up; we're goin' to have a

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kind of Subway saloon, or what we're goin' to call a Someway saloon. You know our hossbarns are some way from our houses, and we lay out to use 'em for this exhilaratin' and religious purpose. You know so many ways have been tried to regulate the traffic, and this is some way; nobody can dispute that."

"Yes," sez I, sithin' deep, "it is a way to everlastin' ruin."

"Yes, I spoze crazy-headed cranks might call it so. But the Deacon and I and other great practical minds, and the Government, have studied on it and we've decided that a man's liberty must not be infringed on, and the best way to regulate the traffic is some way that won't go agin the men's liberty that buy it, and make money for the men that sell it; that is the way we're all tryin' now."

"Sunthin' like tellin' a horse to stop, and whippin' him and takin' money to make him go faster," sez I, with my nose lifted very high.

"Well, yes, sunthin' like that; probably that simely is as nigh as a female woman can comprehend it. It is a very deep and curious subject, but is understood all right by us male men. Deacon Henzy has hired a drunkard,

Nate Murphy



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too, Jim Bowers, and is goin' to foller the fashionable rule jest as I am. Elnathen is goin' to carry his cider and whiskey this afternoon."

"Elnathen!" sez I, "who's he?"

"Why, the saloon-keeper up to Zoar. We hain't goin' to call him Nate any more; we're goin' to lift him up all we can; we're goin' to make him well thought on and his bizness honored and respected by the community; we're goin' to call him Elnathen."

"And you're goin' to give that poor drunken creeter, Abe Meechim, all the whiskey he wants, Josiah Allen, jest to be fashionable?"

"No, mom; I hain't goin' to give it. I'm goin' to sell it."

"Sell it!" sez I, "and poor Miss Meechim wuz lottin' off havin' enough to eat this summer because she thought your influence would keep him from drinkin'."

Josiah looked oncomfortable and I kep' on: "Why, he won't be able to do your work; he'll be drunk half the time."

Sez Josiah, "I'm goin' to sell it on Sundays mostly."

"On Sunday!" sez I. "You're goin to temp'

JOSIAH'S SOMEWAY SALOON

him on the Sabbath day! the only day Miss Meechim sez he treats her half human."

"I tell you, Samantha, I'm doin' it to purify politics. Such men have a cravin' for drink Sundays, and I say a man's liberty hadn't ort



THEY SOLD IT ON SUNDAY IN THE
BARN

to be hampered. He ort to be able to buy drink Sundays or any day, and Deacon Henzy and I have made up our minds to foller the fashionable way. We're goin' to sell our men drink and let 'em see we think it is all right. We lay out to sing a sam every time we open the bung-hole and lead off in prayer. We're jest bound on makin' drinkin' respectable and well thought on. And," sez he, sotey-vosy, "we lay out to feather our own nests, too."

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I groaned and sithed and bitter tears run down my face and I sez: "Oh, have I lived to see this day!"

My tears rent his heart, I could see; but he wuz as sot as Gibraltar or any other old rock.

And I had to see it go on and so did Sister Henzy, but it wuzn't long. Of course it wuz jest as I said; Abram dranked up every cent of his wages, his family wuz on the verge of starvation and the very first Sunday night he whipped Miss Meechim so she carried the marks for weeks; turned his children out doors, broke up his poor old furniture, and acted.

In the mean time Nate Murphy's saloon, goin' from bad to worse, wuz made the rondevoo for a low gang who got drunk there and robbed the U. S. mail, and the saloon wuz closed up, Nate Murphy and two others bein' sent to prison for years and years. Oh, how mortified Josiah and Deacon Henzy wuz, but worse, fur worse wuz to come. One Sunday night after drinkin' all day till they wuz crazy drunk, Abe Meechim and Jim Bowers took Josiah's horses out of the pasture and driv 'em till they wuz most dead. Josiah had to git rid of one of 'em and buy another, and our top

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buggy wuz broke into everlastin' smash. Abe then come back into Deacon Henzy's barn and camped on the hay. We spoze he had matches in his pocket and lit his pipe there; 'tennyrate he burnt down the barn, and Abram's life and soul went off somewhere in the blaze—Id'no where, but the Lord knew, I spoze, and sent him to his place.

And that very night Jim Bowers, a good-natered, good principled feller when he wuz sober, enticed off a little girl, Deacon Henzy's grandchild, the widder Henzy's Emma. She wuz at her grandma Hills', and he went there at ten and told her that her ma wuz sick and had sent for her. They wuz found in the mornin' in an old barn in Grout Nickleson's paster. He wuz dead drunk on the hay-mow, and that sweet little innocent child wuz layin' dead by the side of him. She wuz always a delicate little thing; sunthin' the matter of her heart, and the awful fright and misusage had killed her. When he received his sentence, for of course the enraged law sent him to prison for life, twelve voters for license a settin on him in the jury box; men who had gin the right to sell the stuff that did the murder. He swore

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he knew nothin' of what had happened after he had drunk his third glass that Sunday afternoon in Deacon Henzy's carriage-house.

Miss Henzy had a convulsive fit and wuz bed-sick for weeks, for she knowed who wuz to blame in the first place; and Deacon Henzy, everybody thought he would go crazy. He won't never be the same man agin. The Law didn't blame him, oh no, but his conscience did. He felt like a murderer, and worse. He will never git over it, never. He grew ten years older in a week's time; he loved little Emma as he did his life.

And I thought Josiah Allen would die, he felt so. And then, I and Philury walked to the barn with heads up, and flames in our four eyes, and pulled the bungs out of them barrels and let every drop of that hard cider out onto the manure heap, and smashed the whiskey bottles. Josiah never said a word. He leaned up against the stanchels white as a sheet. He loved little Emma; everybody loved her. It killed her ma. And then to think of that poor drunkard's soul sent out of his miserable body in such a way. Josiah couldn't speak a word for quite a spell, and his first words wuz whilst he wuz cryin' like a babe:

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"I never will try to be fashionable agin, and foller on and do what them stylish men say, and try to make drinkin' pious and respectable! Darn their darn picters!" sez he, sobbin'. "They've ondone me, that's what they've done."

And I see him that very day take that paper tellin' how the eminent clergymen and statesmen wuz tryin' to make drinkin' respectable and the bizness honorable; I see him tear that paper into a hundred pieces and tromple on it.

And I sez, "Josiah, you've sot a good deal of store by them eloquent and stylish speeches and doin's; mebbly this awful calamity will make you think more of an old-fashioned book that is safer to go by than this modern persiflage; that book that sez, "No drunkard shall inherit eternal life,' and 'Cursed is he that putteth the cup to his neighbor's lips.'"

Sez he waverin'ly, "Meechim lived most a mild away; he wuzn't what really could be called a neighbor. But I'm ondone!" sez he. "I can't ever git over it, and I don't want to." And agin he busted into tears.

I pitied him deeply, and I quoted agin from that old-fashioned book, that divine chart for

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earthly and heavenly life that teaches Sunday observance, and temperance, and all the good that we know of. I quoted:

“‘He that turneth away from the evil he hath done and doeth that which is lawful and right, shall save his soul alive.’”

Josiah wuz cryin' too hard to have the consolation strike in much then, but I'm in hopes he'll think on't later and git some comfortin' help out of it; he needs it bad.

This wuz the thing that Jehial Gowdey had throwed into Josiah's face on his way home from mill. This wuz the dretful and tragic memory that made my extra good supper taste like saw-dust and chips to him. This wuz what made the dear linement overspread with such deep gloom that my biscuit, light as a feather, tasted to him as hard as dog bread, and my fragrant coffee seem like wormwood; so I spoze, to say nothin' of my tender briled chicken and etceteries. But I knowed I had a panaky, and as quick as my work wuz done up, and we wuz seated 'round the glowin' hearth, I riz up and brung out that noble scrap-book and read him two incidents from its truthful pages, and as he listened seemin'ly with

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one part of his mind while the other part wuz cungerin' up objections and disputin's, he seemed to forgit Jehial Gowdey's sass and the dretful affair that called that sass forth. He sot and hearn 'em and disputed 'em jest as happy and contented as a infant babe.

CHAPTER XIX

The Work of a "Subjectin' Mind"

*"Provide neither gold nor silver nor brass
for your journey, for the workman is worthy
of his hire."*

"I will give you whatsoever you ask."

A DEVOTED Christian worker in a great city, who had given her life to helping the erring and unfortunate, had a call which she considered as coming directly from the Lord, urging her to go to London to help inaugurate a mission similar to the one she was matron of here.

As she was never disobedient to the heavenly voices, she immediately commenced her preparations to go, altho she had no means to defray her expenses. But she went on as if sure that the Lord, if He had called her to this work, would also provide means for her to carry it out.

She arranged all of her home affairs and the work of the mission so they could be car-

WORK OF A "SUBJECTIN' MIND"

ried on properly during her absence. She bought her steamer trunk, arranged her clothing as best she could, altho she lacked some things even for her modest outfit, and lacked entirely the passage money, she went calmly on with her preparations, at the same time exerting herself to raise a sufficient fund for her expenses.

But the days rolled on, bringing the time nearer and nearer when she must be in London to help in the great work. After all her efforts to raise the money she had not gotten nearly the amount of her passage money.

At last every place she could think of where help could be obtained was exhausted, and she spent almost an entire night in prayer to her Lord to help her to send her the hundred dollars she lacked, although how it was coming and where it was coming from was a perfect mystery to her.

In an uptown hotel a lady was staying whom we will call Miss M. She was interested in the work of this mission and was impressed that she wanted to go and call upon the matron whom we will call Mrs. B. Miss M. had met her some years before in her own home

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and the home of a friend, but had not seen her for years.

She wrote Mrs. B. and in return received a note asking her to come as soon as possible, as she was to sail for London on such a date.

Miss M. asked a friend in the hotel to go with her the next day, which was the Sabbath, and attend services at the mission, if there was a service, which she did not know. But this friend could not go, having to be at her own church that day, so she made up her mind to go alone. And the next morning she went to the office and asked the clerk the best way to get to the mission, which was in a very bad part of the city.

He said in surprise, "You are not going there alone, are you, Miss M.?"

"Why not?" she asked. "There is surely no danger."

"Well," he said, after a little thought, "perhaps not as it is the Sabbath and in the day time."

So she set off. But the clerk's dubious look had aroused some doubt in her own mind as to the wisdom of going alone, and she thought she would stop at a hotel on the way and ask a friend of her's to go with her.



THE MISSION WAS IN A VERY BAD PART
OF THE CITY

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This lady, whom we will call Miss K., readily consented to go, altho she said she had never met Mrs. B. or visited the mission.

They arrived there in due time and were cordially welcomed by the matron and shown over the spotlessly clean house, which amidst its ill-smelling surroundings seemed like a rose on a heap of offal.

As they went through the library Miss M., who was an author, saw how pitifully few were the books in the book-case, and she said to Mrs. B.:

"I will send you if you wish a set of my books to help fill the shelves."

And turning to Miss K. she went on, "If every one who wished this mission well would send even one book the shelves would be abundantly filled."

Miss K. was very wealthy and also generous. She said, "I don't know exactly what books to send, but I will give a hundred dollars to get books with." And turning to Mrs. B. she went on:

"And I will also send you a check of a hundred dollars for your personal use; I will send the money tomorrow morning."

WORK OF A "SUBJECTIN' MIND"

Said Mrs. B., "Let us all kneel right down here and thank the Lord! I prayed for this money last night nearly all night; I lacked just this amount, and did not know how I was to get it. The time was so near when I was to go and every avenue seemed closed. I could not understand how I could possibly get it."

There were no dry eyes in the room when Mrs. B. finished her prayer of gratitude and praise.

Miss M. offered to send a sum to help out her outfit. So they left her radiant with the joy that came from her answered prayer and the blessed assurance that her Lord was mindful of her, was watching over her and had sent her everything needful.

On their way back Miss M. expressed to Miss K. her own appreciation of her generous deed.

But Miss K. said, "I can not do this good work myself, and it is the least I can do to try to help those who are giving their life to it. Don't ever speak of it."

But Miss M. answered, "You can't keep me from telling it; I shall tell everyone I see about it."

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They said at the hotel when she returned she looked ten years younger. She seemed to be walking on air. She thought the Lord had honored her by making her His messenger. If the first friend she asked had gone with her—if the clerk had not looked so dubious—if the friend she then asked to accompany her had not been a very rich woman—if—

“If and if,” sez Josiah. “I know jest how it wuz; it wuz jest a happen.”

“That word ‘happen,’ Josiah Allen, hain’t spelt out in God’s alphabet of glory by his believin’ children. Ask and it shall be given to you. Trust in Him and He shall give thee the desire of thine heart; so reads the Holy word.

“But jest how Mrs. B.’s urgent need wuz telegrafted up to heaven, and jest how all the train of circumstances was marshaled off like a orderly company of soldiers to carry help to Mrs. B., is a mystery to me, a beautiful and mysterious wonder.”

“Well, it hain’t no mystery to me at all; if it hain’t a happen it is the work of a subjectin’ mind.”

“A what?” sez I.

WORK OF A "SUBJECTIN' MIND"

"A subjectin' mind, Samantha. I hearn that all explained out the other day. We each one on us have two minds, or two halves of one mind—the subjectin' and the objectin'.

"You see that law runs through all nater. Some things are subject, naterally follerin' on and submissive and believin', and some are objectin'. To make it plain to you, Samantha, one part of our minds are subjectin' like wimmen, naterally clost, hoardin' up every thing, no knowin' whether they will ever use 'em or not; look at their buro draws! And subjectin' too in the sense of bein' inferior to us men, believin' everythin', runnin' to foolishness, and the other part is like us men objectin' to most everythin', or to use another metafor—"

"I see," sez I hastily. "I see your meanin'; you needn't bring up any more metafors, it may tire you too much."

"Well, I feel it my duty to explain it to you now I've begun. One part of our minds, the female part, bein' in the state they be, is naterally lookin' out for new things, onstabled, whifflin'. And the other part, the male, or objectin' part is refusin' to believe every fool notion that is brung up, objectin' right along. You see, don't you, Samantha?"

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“Yes,” sez I, sithin’ hard. “I hear what you’re sayin’.”

“Yes,” and sez he bitterly, “I see by your linement that you’re usin’ the objectin’ part of



your mind now every minute whilst I’m talkin’ to you.”

“I hain’t tryin’ to, Josiah; I’m only tryin’ to use patience and long sufferin’. But what are you tryin’ to come at with your objectin’ and subjectin’ parts of our minds? In what way duz it affect this case?”

WORK OF A "SUBJECTIN' MIND"

"Why," sez he, scratchin' his head, "I should think any fool could apply a fact when it's sot down before 'em; it hain't no nack to do that."

"Id'no," sez I reasonably. "You can make the best mustard plaster in the world and if it hain't applied to the right spot it hain't goin' to draw the pain out. I've hearn a sight about these two halves of our minds, Josiah Allen. I see, figuratively speakin', the plaster, but I don't know where to apply it to this case, so's to have it draw."

"I persoom so; I persoomed that would be so. I'll talk it over with some man; I'll talk it over with Brother Henzy and we'll try to fix it out and simplify it so's a woman can understand it."

CHAPTER XX

"That Wuz It; It Wuz a Freak"

"Through faith we understand that things that are seen are not made of things that do appear."

"He worketh signs and wonders in Heaven and in Earth."

AN earnest Christian woman was at Oberammergau, where the Passion Play is given every ten years.

As every one knows, the people of this Bavarian mountain town nearly three hundred years ago made a vow that if the Lord would avert the plague with which the city was threatened, they would keep Him in everlasting remembrance by enacting the closing scenes of His life every ten years as long as the world stands.

And during this long, long period this simple, devout people have kept their vow.

This visitor from a foreign land, like all who beheld the play, had been thrilled to the soul by the devout earnestness and sincerity of the

“IT WUZ A FREAK”

actors, which seemed to bring back in reality the tragedy and triumph of the closing scenes in the life of the blessed Lord.

But the play was over now and she was making ready to depart for her home in an American city.

The last morning of her stay, as she walked through the streets for the last time, she picked up a pebble out of the street, as a souvenir of the place where she had seen and enjoyed so much. The place where her believing soul had seemed to come into so much nearer contact with the Master's. It was nothing but a common pebble she thought, no different from the countless ones with which the street was covered.

Years passed away and brought many changes to this woman. At the time of her visit to Oberammergau she was very wealthy, surrounded in her home with every luxury that large wealth could give. But through a series of financial disasters she lost all her property and knew not which way to turn to get even the common necessities of life.

Being reared so tenderly by perhaps foolishly indulgent parents, she knew no way of

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earning anything herself, although accomplished in a young lady amateurish way, she knew nothing thoroughly enough to teach, and was not strong enough to do manual labor.

She was utterly despairing and knew not what to do, but our necessity is always God's opportunity.

One day when more than usually sorrowful and discouraged, she had occasion to open the old-fashioned trunk she had carried to Oberammergau and she took out the little stone which had lain undisturbed in the bottom of the trunk for years and years, ever since her return to this country.

She was idly turning it in her hand when suddenly something about it drew her attention and she turned it to the light, and as she turned it in a certain direction, there, plain on the broken surface of the stone, she saw the head of the Christ. It did not show only as it was held in just that light.

Scientists to whom she showed the stone called it a freak of fracture. But there it was, the high forehead, the sad eyes, the long sweeping beard and mustache; it was perfect, with the saintly divine expression over all.

“IT WUZ A FREAK”

Well, it was just as easy for scientists to call it a freak of fracture as anything else. But this woman, an earnest Christian, with the faith of one, she believed it was her Lord who performed this marvelous work for her to help one of His children in their hour of weakness and need.

For she exhibited this stone with a little talk of how it came into her possession, and about the Passion Play, and so earns a good living.

Sez Josiah: “Them scientists had it right; it wuz a freak.”

“Well,” sez I reasonably, “mebby it wuz, but it wuz a good freak anyway. For how did she



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come to pick up jest that one stun that had that face on it?"

"How do you know it wuz the only one? I shouldn't wonder a mite if they wuz all freaks. I tell you, Samantha, there is more freaks in this world than you have any idee on."

"I know that," sez I sithin'. "I know that only too well. But how come she to not notice what wuz on the stun till years and years after, and then jest when she needed the knowledge, to discover it?"

Josiah leaned back and stretched out his arms and yawned, and then said decidedly and even crossly:

"Well, I don't believe in it, anyway. For why hain't Deacon Bobbett and I found such stuns when we've been layin' stun wall? Why hain't Ury found one in the slate stuns down to the creek when he wuz drawin' gravel? I don't believe in it at all."

"Yes," sez I, "and why didn't Deacon Bobbett's father invent the ocean cable when he wuz buildin' his creek fence? Why didn't he in imagination see its mystic lengths spannin' the ocean as he laid his rails under the water? And why didn't Ury discover a wireless tele-

"IT WUZ A FREAK"

graph when he wuz helpin' put up our light-nin' rods? And why didn't you discover some new law of gravitation when you wuz gatherin' our winter apples?"

Sez I, "To the devout believer nothin' seems impossible for the All Father. He sees His wisdom in earth and sky and sea, and expects what people call mericles to be performed, if necessary, to carry out His gracious will towards them."

"Oh mericles!" sez Josiah scoffin'ly, "I don't believe in 'em; I never have seen 'em, nor I never expect to."

Sez I, "Can you say that? You a pefessor and a member of the meetin'-house," sez I. "Every time an evil man is converted and is turned right 'round from his darkness and wickedness into the light and good livin' by a power he feels but cannot see, what is that but a mericle?"

"Everything as you may say, is miraculous, Josiah Allen, from the sun risin' in the mornin' on our earth, and both on 'em movin' onwards amidst the hosts of planets, all upheld by the marvelous law of attraction, down to the tiny grass-blade creepin' up by our door-step,

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pushed upward by a life we can't understand, and our hand reachin' down to pluck it, moved by a law we don't comprehend. Everything we see and do you may call mirac'lous, only bein' so used to 'em we don't notice 'em."

Josiah yawned boldly and shamelessly and I proceeded: "When you dispute this, Josiah, and contend that mericles don't take place now, you're disputin' the word of our Lord; for after all of His wonderful mericles did He not say to the disciples He sent out into the world:

"'Greater things than these shall ye do.'
What is impossible to Him, Josiah Allen?"

But Josiah wuz asleep.



“ BUT JOSIAH WUZ ASLEEP ”

CHAPTER XXI

Josiah Contemplates Breakin' Down

JOSIAH had his life insured some time ago agin my wishes, for I told him what would money be to me if he wuz took; it would seem like dirt in my mouth.

And he said he guessed the bread and meat the money would buy would taste better than dirt whether he wuz here or in a happier spear.

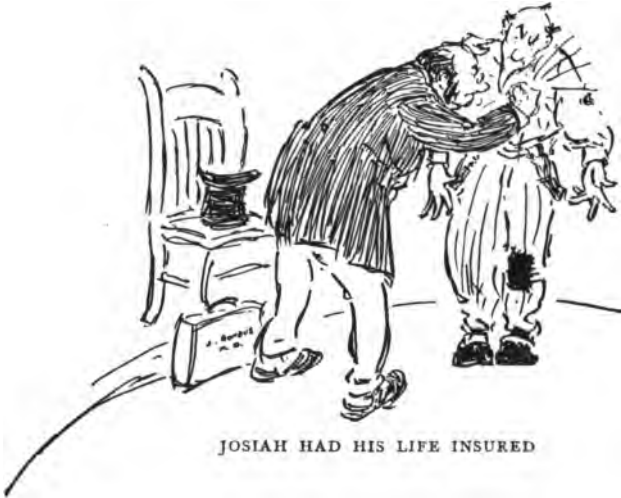
I didn't argy, for I loved his tender thoughtfulness and he went and got insured for five hundred dollars, payin' the premium jest as stiddy as old Nater's spring and fall visits.

Well, when the dretful doin's of the insurance companies come out he wuz most distracted. He said he should lose every cent he'd paid in besides leavin' me not insured of gettin' anything. He wuz dretful worried and brooded over it, but one day he come in real excited and sez he, "Samantha, I've thought of a plan to git even with them Equitable fellers."

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"Equitable!" sez I sternly, "I'd git another name if I wuz them, or else I'd name over stealin' and called it equity."

"Well, I'll tell you what I've thought on. Id'no as you'll agree to it and help me. But



JOSIAH HAD HIS LIFE INSURED

I've thought how I could feel safe financially and beat them chaps at their own game."

"You know how handy five hundred dollars would come on the farm this time of year. I've thought I could pretend to pass away; we could work it up between us. You could git a cheap coffin, or for that matter Ury could make one. There is lumber overhead in the hoss

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barn, and then after you'd drawed the money you could let me out."

I gin a deep holler groan and sez: "Oh, what loads and loads of iniquity them Unequitable fellers have got to face at the judgment. What won't sinners do if a perffessor and a Deacon is put up by 'em to commit such wickedness."

"Id'no as it would be so dretful wicked; it wouldn't be gobblin' up millions and millions as they have from widders and orphans and such. And it would be takin' back a little of the robber's booty, sunthin' as if a good man had took a few dollars of Captain Kidd's money and bought sam-books with it."

Agin I groaned out, "Did I ever expect to see this day! my pardner bein' led away by fashionable stealin' and pretendin' to be dead."

"Why, I meant, Samantha, I'd kinder faint away or swoon, as they say in stories. Anybody has a right to faint, hain't they?" he snapped out.

I didn't reply, for I had put my handkerchief to my face to wipe away a few tears. Them tears melted him and he sez:

"I never should thought on't if it hadn't been

JOSIAH BREAKIN' DOWN



"GOIN' OFF INTO FOREIGN COUNTRIES TO ENJOY THEMSELVES"

for their doin's; and see how many good smart men high up in the world wuz in it with 'em; stealin' away, makin' money hand over fist and goin' off into foreign countries to enjoy themselves, spendin' money like water. I thought

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mebby you and I could go as fur as Spoon Settlement, go to a tavern and take our meals and jest spread ourselves. I thought mebby I could be somebody if I follered on and did likewise, but I spoze I can give it up if you feel so about it."

Anon he took up the daily paper and read awhile, and then he dropped it onnoticed and seemed to be ponderin' sunthin' he'd jest read and finally he sez:

"Well, what do you say to my chargin' the meetin'-house ten thousand dollars a year for my services? You know I'm treasurer this year and to the head of affairs."

Sez I, "Who ever hearn of such a ridiculous idee; and it wouldn't be worth more'n five dollars a year, if you wuz goin' to charge 'em anything; and Thomas J. has helped you with the accounts."

"Yes, I wuz layin' out to have him ask five thousand dollars for his services; it would be all in the family, you know; it would be stylish and fashionable."

Sez I coldly, cold as any glazier: "What would your brethren say to such preposterous charges? and what would your pasture say?"

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"Oh, I could make that all right; I'd planned to tell 'em I wuz usin' the money in a missionary way. You know I could give Tirzah Ann a few thousands, and pass it 'round amongst the relations on my side and we could live in grandeur, Samantha. We could fix our dwellin' into a palace and own a racin' car, and travel to Loontown and Zoar in a yot."

"Dismiss that wicked, silly thought from your mind, Josiah Allen. You know if they would listen to any such fool idees it would clean the brethren and sistern right out; take their hard earin's for your sinful vanity. How could you face them and your Maker?"

"Oh, I laid out to tell the brethren I wuzn't runnin' the meetin'-house for their good, but in a missionary sperit, and as for my Maker," sez he, kinder squirmin', "I will come out better than them that have took millions in the same sperit."

I didn't speak a word, but I felt the corners of my lips and my nose go up funder than they had in years, and I spoze the silent disdain and scorn wuz impressive and fearful, for he hastened to say:

"It would be jest as stylish and fashionable

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as it could be and if I didn't git it, it would show I had a wideawake, teachable, progressive sperit in me."

Agin I spake not, only the look on my noble linement, and he resoomed: "Well, if you're so agin that what do you say to this? You know I'm tax collector for this presink; spozin' I let off Deacon Gowdey and Cyrenus Shelmadine, and a few other rich men, and make it up on the poorer brethren; they'll rebate me; it will be profitable and stylish as the old Harry."

"Yes," sez I, "jest about like the doin's of the old Harry, if by him you mean the manager of Haydees; jest about like his doin's." And I gin a deep, holler groan.

"Oh, take on, will you; dum it all! you're never willin' for me to be stylish and fashionable and make money as other smart, genteel men do."

I'd stood all I could; I didn't dain to argy with him, but got up and walked out of the room, carryin' my noble linement high, but with a heavy, achin' heart inside of me, and I shot the door considerable hard behind me.

Of all the fool idees he'd ever broached, these wuz the cap-sheaf, but I knowed how he come

JOSIAH BREAKIN' DOWN

by 'em, and I almost made up my mind then and there that I wouldn't let another newspaper come inside the house. I felt turrible.

But he didn't say anything more about it. I spoze my looks had fairly danted him, and so them dangers passed over like heavy thunder clouds, but like them black clouds time and agin they come up in a new place and thundered and showered down onto me.

Oh, if them Unequitable men and trusts and rebaters and the high-up fashionable men linked in with 'em, only knowed what a black influence they throwed out fur and near it would skair 'em most to death. If my Josiah, almost a pattern of goodness wuz led away by their pernicious example, what must the effect be on men looser jinted in morals all over the world. Oh dear me suz! it is dretful to think on't.

Well, it wuzn't long after this that quite a number of men Josiah knew, broke down; broke completely down and got up agin rich; they made it dretful profitable. Why, Sam Pendergrast made thousands and thousands of dollars, so I hearn.

And my pardner had a streak of real bad

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luck about this time—lost a fat shoat, and got cheated by a gold-brick man. And then somebody borreyed permanently our best umbrell onbeknown to us. And he got cheated in a



"MY PARDNER GOT CHEATED BY A
GOLD-BRICK MAN"



pair of galluses, perfect frauds they wuz, broke down the first time he wore 'em, right in meetin', and he had to pin up his trousers sarahuptishusly right there durin' the sermon in order to git home decent. Of course he had

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to walk out of meetin' dretful slow and sort o' humped over, and the brethren and sistern gathered 'round him thinkin' he wuz took sick sudden, and his looks wuz so queer and his words so sort o' voyalent and incoherent that the story got started that he wuz loosin' his mind.

He'd better let me explained. But he said no, he wuzn't goin' to have it throwed in his face that he went to meetin' with his trouses pinned on.

So he had a dretful mortifyin' time tryin' to git out to the democrat and git in. And I felt queer and anxious too, but most immediately afterwards I knit him a good pair of woosted ones and he ortn't to took it so hard. And jest at this time he had his best whip took; it wuz stole right out of the democrat while we wuz to evenin' meetin. It seemed as if that whip wuz the last straw on my poor pardner's back; he looked dretful depressted as he sot by the fire next mornin' tryin' to mend a old whip he had. The end wuz broke off, and he wuz tryin' to set it like a broken limb with some pieces of whalebone and black linen thread. But his hands wuz so clumsy he couldn't make it

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work; his idees wuz willin' but his fingers wuz weak. He couldn't hold the whalebone on both sides and wind the thread even, and after watchin' him a spell I sez:

"Let me fix it, Josiah."

He wuz willin' enough to let me take the job, and he took up the county paper to read a little while I wuz fixin' the whip, but with a gloomy shade still restin' on his forward. And the very first thing he come to, it wuz writ down in glowin' terms, an account of a great party jest gin by Sam Pendergras'es folks. It wuz a great success; money must have flowed like water.

And in the same paper wuz an account of Sam's new French racin' car and how fast he could go in it, eighty miles an hour our distinguished citizen could travel in it, so the paper said. Distinguished! sez I to myself; I should think he wuz. But as Josiah read it a still more gloomy shadder settled down on his forward and anon he dropped the paper in his lap and sot bent over in gloomy thought, and seemed to be reckonin' sunthin', for I see him countin' on his fingers.

And I sez, "What are you reckonin' up, Josiah?"

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Sez he, with a bitter axent, "I'm calculatin' the difference between Sam's travelin' and our'n, with the old mair."

I knowed three milds an hour wuz a good gait for the mair. I see it wuz a big difference and I sez tenderly, "I wouldn't try to think on't, Josiah, and 'tennyrate," sez I, "as you well know from experience ortos may be swifter and more stylish, but mairs are more safe and sure. The old mair hain't liable to explode and send us up a-kitin' through the air, and she don't breathe so loud, and her breath don't smell so strong."

Though I love ortos myself, yet with such comfortin' idees I tried my best to lighten the gloom on his linement, as a tender pardner will. But the dark shadder didn't leave him and he pulled his hat down over his melancholy forward and started out towards the barn. But about half way there he stopped and stood stun still several minutes as if a Thought had met him on the way and arrested him.

And anon he turned onto his heel and come in with a excited air onto him, a dretful curious look as if he knowed he wuzn't doin' right and

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yet firm and onyieldin' some like our old white hen bound to set on a couple of door-knobs and a few stun, and sez he with that sot, sour expression:

"Samantha, I've made up my mind; I'm goin' to break down."

Sez I, droppin' the whip onnoticed to my feet, "What do you mean, Josiah Allen? Is your health failin' you? Do you feel weak-kneed and faint-hearted-like? Duz your back give way? Duz your head whirl?"

My axents wuz tender, for how sickness and danger in a pardner draws us towards 'em; how nigh they seem to us, and I spoze, speakin' scientifically, it duz draw 'em clost to us, clear inside our hearts. But he waived off my tender anxiety with a impatient look and sez:

"It hain't nothin' of that sort, Samantha; my bodily health is as good as can be expected of a married man. But my idee is, I'm goin' to borry all the money I can from everybody I can and then break down and keep the money."

As prepared as I thought I was for his delinquency, I wuz trully too horrow-struck to speak a word, and mebbly my silence emboldened him, for he went on brightenin' up and

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speakin' alert: "You know, Samantha, jest as well as I do how profitable it is and how much money is to be made by it. You know jest how genteel and fashionable Sam has got to be."

But here his axent faltered, for I spoze I looked so fur away it danted him. I felt very distant from him at that minute, more'n a mild distant. Pardners will feel so sometimes right in hours of affection and nearness, all of a sudden they seem some distance apart, though they may be settin' on the same chair, but they are milds and milds apart in sperit and mind. I had such a feelin' then to a extreme degree, and I spoze I showed it so plain that it appalled him, for his voice took on a pleadin' axent and some pitiful and he sez:

"I would put the money in your hands, Samantha, so there couldn't anybody touch it. You know jest how Sam worked it; he borreyed fur and near, got holt of all the money he could, bought property in his wife's name and the creditors had to whistle. He made piles and piles of money, and can go eighty milds an hour!" sez he bitterly, "and we have to meach along three milds an hour and use a whip for that, and now even our whip is stole.

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Sam has made most all his money by breakin' down; he's broke three times to my knowledge, and made it profitable every time. And I want to break down a few times, Samantha; I want to make some money. I want to, like a dog. I'd put it all in your hands," sez he agin.

Sez I, "When my hands are dead hands, Josiah Allen, not before; when these hands are folded over a dead Samantha's bosom, not till then," sez I, and I'll bet my axent made him fairly homesick; it seemed to come from such a distant country. And so it did, for our sperits wuz dwellin' leagues apart, leagues and furlongs, and I sez to myself in a holler, grief-strucken voice, "Oh, them insurance companies! what morals you've made to tottle from one end of the country to the other! What, what have you got to answer for?"

But Josiah kep' on, "Le's break down, Samantha, jest for once, anyway; it is so fashionable and profitable; come on, le's!"

I groaned and sithed; I felt turrrible, turrrible, but throwed a thought back onto his past sufferin's and the influences he'd been under, and seemed to travel back some nearer to him. I seemed to draw near enough to git mad at him,

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mad as a hen. And I looked him in the eye with a arrer in each one of mine and a bayonet and a spear, and he quailed but still kep' on in pleadin' axents:

“Well, hang it all! I can't make money so fast in any other way. And I can tell you, Samantha, it is a temptation to other pious folks, to see how respectable perfessers are a stealin' right and left and nothin' done about it to speak on, or what is done will all fizzle out in the end and they'll hang onto their money. It is a temptation to other perfessers to go and do likewise. Why, one man made more money in that Inequitable company in one day than the hull of us Jonesvillians and Zoarites and Loontowners can make by ten years' hard work at emmanuel labor hoein' corn and potatoes and weedin' onions, dum 'em! and histin' milk-cans 'round. Le's break down, Samantha; come on, le's.”

Oh, the feelin's I felt. I looked at him with them various weepons in my gray eyes and they made him quail agin and keep quailed for some time, and after a moment of real impressive silence I spake out in a lofty, noble tone and sez:

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“If you want to steal, Josiah Allen, go out openly and steal; break one commandment at a time and be done with it. But don’t break a dozen or sixteen at a time; don’t add deceitfulness and lyin’ and perjury and frenzied finance to the sin; call it plain steal and be done with it.”

“But it hain’t stylish, Samantha, to call it steal. Graft is a more fashionable name, or embezzlement, or misappropriation, or rebatin’, or bankruptcy, and I wish you’d use one of them terms; it makes a man feel more comfortable when he’s contemplatin’ enterin’ fashionable financial circles,” sez he, wipin’ his heated forward on his bandanna.

Sez I, “The name God gin it is good enough for me, Josiah Allen.”

“But I tell you agin, common plain stealin’ hain’t genteel; let a man steal a loaf of bread to keep his children from starvin’, that’s looked down on and the law stomps on such a vile deed and calls it stealin’. But let a man make a million in the way I spoke on, the law kinder winks at him and folks call it a financial manooover, and he is looked up to. It is real stylish and is called so. You see the editor of the *Gimlet*

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called Sam a distinguished citizen. I can meach along and be honest, and break my back raisin' white beans and pickin' up stuns, and wear my hands out strippin' our old cows, and when have I been called a distinguished citizen?

"I tell you breakin' down is stylish; it is fashionable to borry money of rich and poor, widders specially; it seems to be more fashionable to borry of poor widders and old maids than anybody else. Git all their savin's, and all the proppety you can of everybody and then break down and keep it. I don't know of anything, Samantha, that is so stylish and profitable, both together, as breakin' down is, unless it is the doin's of the insurance companies and trusts and rebaters; and we could break down jest as easy as fallin' off the fence, if you felt like it, and git up rich as two Jews."

Oh, how deep the pizen arrer had entered into his soul; how turrible! how turrible! I felt I needed the tongue of a Miss Cicéro or Miss Demonsthènes to convert him and let him see the brink he wuz totterin' on the edge of, and hangin' over onbeknown to himself. I felt that no matter what become of my mornin's work, I must eppisode a little, even if my dish-

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water did git cold as a frog, and I had to heat it up agin.

Sez I, "Josiah Allen, I took you for better or *worse*." (I spoze I may have put a stronger emphasis on the *worse*, such is a woman's tenderness and faithfulness to duty), "and for *worse*, Josiah!" I repeated with emphasis, "And it is my duty to bear with your eccentricities and your faults, and if I see you'd made up your mind to go out as a highway robber or bandit, and it would mortify me to death, but if I see you bound on it and I couldn't stop you, why, I don't know but I could fasten your bands and spurs on for you, and start you off a horse-back and then lay down and die away. Or, if you'd made up your mind to be a brigand, and it would shorten my days to see you start off on that brig, but I could even help you up onto it with a easy heart compared to my feelin's of seein' you break down a purpose; that is sunthin' I will not stand. You shall not break all of the Commandments at one hitch, not if I part with you before a Justice of the Peace."

This awful threat of mine stunted him and I spoze my eloquence also had sunthin' to do

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with the powerful effect it had on him. He riz up and assayed to git him a drink of water out of the sink, but his hand wobbled; he set the dipper down agin without drinkin'. I had also by this time riz up and wuz standin' before him leanin' back a little and my arms folded acrost my chest.

My looks wuz noble, I knew it, for the lookin' glass bein' jest acrost from me I ketched a view of me and admired myself; I couldn't help it. And if my noble riz-up-looks impressed me, what must have been the effect on the man that adores me?

As the dipper fell out of his weak conscience-smut grasp, he sez, "Well, Samantha, I spoze I can give it up, it hain't the first time and I don't spose it will be the last that you've broke up my bein' stylish and fashionable."

I still kep' my poster (which I knew wuz exceedin'ly becomin'), and he added, "Can't you cook a young rooster for dinner if I go out and kill it? I will dress it and git it ready, seein' I hain't much to do jest now."

Then the strain yielded and I felt he wuz safe, for a longin' for good vittles and a wil-

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lin'ness to help git 'em is a symptom that never fails in his moral dognoses.

I onfolded my arms and sez: "Yes, dear Josiah, you split up the kindlin' wood and bring in the fowl and I will brile it and make a lemon puddin'."

And I het up my dishwater and got my work done up and dinner on the table at twelve M.

But that night I read him two chapters out of that noble scrap-book, rememberin' Doctor Bombus'es words and hopin' that they and his arguin's on 'em would help direct his blood that wuz flowin' towards the bump of onlawful aqisitivness, towards his more moral and religious bumps, and mebbly they did, but Id'no.

CHAPTER XXII

Ministers as Advertisers

"In the day of my trouble I will call upon thee, for thou wilt answer me."

"The prayer of faith shall heal the sick."

A BISHOP, known and loved the world over, relates the following: He went into his pulpit one morning and among the other notices lying there for him to read, was one saying that a woman, a member of his church, who had been bed-ridden for over twelve years, desired the prayers of himself and his congregation that day after the morning service, that she might be healed.

The church was in a great city with a very large membership. The clergyman had never seen or heard of the woman before. But he complied with her request and after the service several of the devout members of the church remained with him, and they all prayed earnestly for the woman's recovery.

The next Sabbath the clergyman went into

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his pulpit and among the many notices he read that morning was this :

“The invalid who requested prayers last Sabbath that she might be healed, wishes to return her thanks to the clergymen and congregation, and to tell them that she was entirely cured from that hour.”

The clergyman told his wife after they returned home he thought they had better go and see this woman, so the next morning they set out to find her. She lived quite a distance away, but they readily found her as her name and address were on the notices given.

They found her perfectly well, rejoicing in the Lord and in His might and mercy, for as she had written in the last notice, she was entirely healed of her infirmities.

She said she sent for her friends and relatives to gather in her sick room at the hour appointed. They knelt about her bedside where she had lain in her pain and weakness so many long years, and while the clergyman and his congregation were petitioning the Great Healer for His health-giving power to descend, she and her friends had added their prayers and petitions.

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As they were ended she rose from that bed of suffering, where she had lain helpless for over twelve years, and walked.

I finished readin' and waited for my pardner to speak. But he sot silent, runnin' his hand through his hair, seemin'ly not findin' anythin' to say in them thin gray locks, tho he wuz lookin' for ideas there or anywhere they could be found.

He knowed well that clergyman and his wife, and knowed that he couldn't cast a doubt onto their words and the truth of what they had witnessed with their own eyes and ears. No, he didn't dast.

And when I paused a minute for effect, and then sez agin in a noble lofty axent, "What do you think of that, Josiah Allen? What onbelievin' argument have you to throw onto this incident, or what insinuations?"

He scratched his head more industriously than he had, but seemin'ly couldn't stir up a doubt or a idee of any kind in it.

And I put the query agin, not in a haughty axent, but in a deep believin' one and real eloquent. I did it for his own good in hopes I

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could roust up his faith and reverent feelin's, and forever destroy Uncle Sime Bentley's pernicious influence.

"What fault have you to find with this true and inspirin' incident, Josiah Allen?"



" BISHOPS AND MINISTERS MAKIN' DAILY NEWSPAPERS OF
THEMSELVES "

As I said, "fault," a change come over his perplexed mean; his linement cleared some and he said:

"I don't believe in ministers standin' up in

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the pulpit and readin' off a long string of news items. I don't believe in bishops and ministers makin' daily newspapers of themselves."

"Nor I don't, Josiah, but that is neither here nor there."

"Yes, it is *there*; you said he read it."

"What of it; it hain't no use talkin' about that."

"Yes it is too, if I chuse to—I chuse to, so there."

"Oh, well; of all the poor excuses a pardner will git up to keep from ownin' up to the truth."

"Id'no as it is a poor excuse; I said and I say agin I don't believe in ministers of the gospel takin' up their sacred time in the pulpit advertisin' peanut-stands, crazy-quilts, and eyster parties. There hain't nothin' sacred in a eyster supper, specially if you have to take off your coat and dive to git a eyster."

Sez I sadly, "Josiah Allen, I wish you wuz more megum. When did you ever have to dive for a oyster?"

"At church eyster suppers; I always have to, or go without."

"Such talk is painful to me, Josiah Allen. There is no megumness in it."



"THERE HAIN'T NOTHING SACRED IN A EYSTER SUPPER"

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“Well, I say and stick to it. I go to meetin’ to hear the gospel; I don’t go to hear that Mary Jones is goin’ to give a thimble party, or Ann Smith is goin’ to sell ice cream and cake. There hain’t nothin’ upliftin’ and inspirin’ in such news, even if it is in a good cause. Why, Id’no if they keep on but ministers will be expected to walk up the isle with a board overcoat on advertisin’ socials and pound parties, and gamblin’ chances on doylers and sofa pillers.”

As he said this he ketched up his old hat and started out almost precipitately before I could frame a reply, even if I had a frame which wuz doubtful. For I believe considerable in the idees he’d promulgated, tho I considered ’em very ontimely.

And I felt that they wuz advanced jest because he couldn’t think of a word to say, throwin’ doubt on the true incident I had read.

I overlooked it in him on that account and pitied him, and I mentioned it to him afterwards that I did. And he didn’t seem to like that; he acted real huffy.

So hard it is to know jest how to git along with pardners; it requires deep and arjous study. And yet I feel that they pay after all.

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Pardners are often real accusations and are handy to have 'round, so convenient to git things offen the upper buttery shelf and set up stoves and carry out the oleander, and when tramps are 'round. And they are almost invaluable in processions. And then Josiah is a good natered creeter pretty nigh half the time.

CHAPTER XXIII

Horse Sense

"Now there was at Jappa a certain disciple. This woman was full of good works and alms deeds which she did."

"And it came to pass in these days that she was sick and died. And Peter kneeled down and prayed—and she opened her eyes and when she saw Peter she sat up and he gave her his hand and lifted her up—He presented her alive."

ONE of the most influential and best beloved Christian workers of a large city lay dying. She was an eminent physician herself. Her only son and his wife were with her. They, too, were experienced doctors, and they knew that their mother, the well beloved worker, full of good works and alms deeds, was swiftly passing away. The dying saint was conscious; she knew the unmistakable death symptoms, which she had watched so many thousands of times. The son and daughter also knew too well the truth that death was very near. The

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death chill was upon her; she lost all consciousness.

An eminent clergyman, full of faith and love, an intimate friend of the family, came to the bed-side, and at the request of her children, knelt down and prayed, laying his hand upon her as the Bible teaches when it says:

“If any of you are sick call the elders of the church and they shall lay their hands upon you and pray, and the prayer of faith shall save the sick.”

He laid his hand upon her and prayed that if possible, if it were the Lord’s will, her life might be spared.

Slowly and steadily life came back to the cold body from whence it had almost fled. The death chill passed away, consciousness returned and she heard the voice of the dearly beloved pastor praying by her bed-side.

A year after that she said to a friend with tears running down her face:

“My dear, I was dying, and that prayer called me back to earth again.”

She was then well and strong.

Sez Josiah: “I don’t take no stock in such

HORSE SENSE



"THERE HAIN'T ANY
GOOD SENSE IN BE-
LIEVIN' 'EM"

prayers as that; there hain't any good horse sense in believin' 'em."

"Hain't there any other sense, Josiah Allen, in heaven or earth only horse sense? We read of spiritual things that are spiritually dis-

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cerned. We read of the teachings of the sperit, learnt by reverent souls below, that are fitted to comprehend 'em."

"Well, give me horse sense every time," sez Josiah, "and you can have the other kind."

"I hain't no objections to horse sense, and have never said I had. But a horse can't be expected to fly like a bird; a horse won't be ketched sighin', and aspirin' and cryin'.

"Oh, had I the wings of a dove that I might flee away."

"A horse is contented on the ground in a box stall; it can't soar. No fixture could be applied to its legs that would make it strike out in the clear fields of air and soar up and up, searchin' for the hidden things of the sperit. A horse would ruther stay on the ground and eat oats and prance 'round and kick."

"Well," sez Josiah, "it is time to hang on the tea-kettle; I'm gittin' hungry, hungry as a dog."

He looked real fraxious and worrisome, and I immediatly riz up and went out in the kitchen and got a delicious supper for that dear man. For as it is well known I always con-

HORSE SENSE

tended that when a woman has took the resk of seein' to a man on her hands, she ort to do the best she can with what she has to do with. Truly, Investigation holds up a bright fascinatin' light bagonin' to us and shinin' down beguillin' pathways full of new thoughts and old ones; aspiration, inspiration, knowledge, so dear to them who yearns to attain, and we love to linger there in that enchantin' realm.

Yet in order to be megum a female pardner must not forgit to lock arms with Duty. And whilst it is imperative that she should prop up her companion's morals and hang onto him if he is slidin' back, it is also imperative that she should take down her curl-papers, tend to her toylet and set him a invitin' table in a cozy attractive room. And not expect clean livin' from dirty surroundin's, or fine clear results to foller from muddy coffee, or pure upliftin' thoughts from black, heavy bread, or tender words and deeds towards a frowzy pardner, servin' tough leathery steaks in a room full of dirt and disorder.

Truly married life is a curious state, as curious as any side-show in the hull circus of life.

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But if it is drawn along by Love settin' on a high seat drivin' them two bears so often hearn on, but so difficult to break into double harness, it is a good show.

The names of them two bears are Bear and Forbear.

CHAPTER XXIV

A Male Magdalene

I ATTENDED a beautiful party yesterday; it wuz a anniversary, and carried on regardless of style and expense. Over seven wuz invited, besides the happy folks who gin the party. And the cookin' wuz, I do almost believe, as good as my own. That's dretful high praise, but Miss Chawgo deserves it. It wuz to celebrate their weddin' day, which occurred the year before at half past two, and dinner wuz on the table at exactly that hour.

There wuz Josiah and me, Miss Bizer Kipp and Lophemia, she that wuz Submit Tewksbury, and her husband, and Widder Bassett and her baby. That made a little over seven; the baby hadn't ort to count so high as a adult. The party wuz all in high sperits, and all dressed well and looked well, though Miss Bassett whispered to me that Miss Kipp had flammed out a little too much.

She wuz very dressy in a pink flowered shally with lots of ribbins kinder floatin', but

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she felt and said that she wuz celebratin' a very auspicious occasion with very dear friends, which made us lenitent to her. Weddin' anniversaries are now and agin happy and agreeable, and the male party here, Nelt Chawgo, how much! how much that young man had to be thankful for! yes indeed!

And Id'no but I might jest as well tell about it now as any time while in history's pages the gay party is settin' 'round the bountifully spread table.

I'll make the story short as possible. Most three years ago we had a new arrival in Jonesville, a young grocery man by the name of Nelson Chawgo; the young folks all called him Nelt. He bought out old uncle Simon Pettigrew, his good will and bizness, though so fur as the good will went I wouldn't paid a cent fur it, or not more than a cent, anyway. Uncle Sime abused his wife, wuz clost as the bark to a tree, and some mentioned the word "sand" in connection with his sugar, and "peas" with his coffee, and etcetery, etcetery. But his bizness wuz what might be called first rate; he had laid up money and retired triumphant at seventy-one.

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But to resoom. Uncle Sime Pettigrew's place of bizness wuz a handsome one, a new brick block with stun granite trimmin's, some stained glass over the doors and winders, and everything else it needed for comfort and respectability. He had a big stock of goods and whoever bought 'em and set up bizness in that handsome new block would have been looked up to even if he had been an old man with a bald head, rumatiz and a wooden leg.

But when it wuz a young, handsome, unmarried man, you may imagin he made a sensation to once, and he wuz as handsome a chap as you would often see, light complected with sort o' melancholy blue eyes and curly brown hair and mustash.

The Jonesvillians and Loontowners went into ecstacies over him the first day he appeared in meetin', he wuz so beautiful. They acted fairly foolish; they praised him up so and wuz so enthusiastick. But it is my way to keep calmer and more demute. I will try to restrain my emotions if I have to tie a string to 'em and haul 'em back if I find 'em liable to go too fur. I never could bear anybody or anything that slopped over, from a oriter to a kettle of



"IT WUZ A YOUNG, HANDSOME, UNMARRIED MAN"

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maple syrup, and I kep' holt of my faculties and common sense in this case, and several of the sisters in the meetin'-house got mad as hens at me, and importuned me sharp as to why I didn't go into spazzums of admiration over him.

And I sez, "He is sweet-lookin', I can't deny that, but there is a kinder weak and waverin' expression to his face that would cause me anxiety if I wuz his Ma."

But when I promulgated these idees to the other sistern, sister Bizer Kipp especially, she most took my head off. She said his face wuz "Be-a-u-tiful, just perfection."

But I still repeated what I had said in a me-gum tone, and with my most megumest mean, but I agreed with her in a handsome way that Nelt wuz what would be called very, very sweet and winsome, and would be apt to attract female attention and be sought after. And so he wuz. As days rolled on he grew to be the rage in Jonesville, a he-belle, as you may say. Groceries lay in piles on wimmen's buttery shelves and sickness wuz rampant, caused by a too free use of raisins and cinnamon and all-spice. They are too dryin'.

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And still the wimmen flocked to his counters as if they couldn't buy enough stuff, and they priced peanuts, and got samples of cast-steel soap, and acted. No place of amusement wuz considered agreeable or endurable without Nelt Chawgo; no party wuz gin without his name stood first on the list, and when he got there he wuz surrounded by a host of the fair sect showerin' attention on him, anxious to win a smile from him.

He wuz doin' dretful well in bizness, and doin' well in morals so fur as I knew. He wuz payin' attention in a sort of a languid, half-hearted way, to Lophemia Kipp. She wuz a pretty girl, sister Kipp's only child. It wuz very pleasin' to her Ma. Folks thought she wuz the one that had brought it about; she acted so triumphant and big feelin' about it, and told everybody how active Nelt wuz in the meetin'-house, and how well he wuz doin' in bizness, and how strong and stimulat'in' his tea and coffee wuz.

Folks thought, as I say, that she had more to do about his payin' attention to Lophemia than she did, fur it wuz thought that she had gin her heart to young Jim Carter, old lawyer

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Carter's youngest boy. He had gone west on a ranch, and it wuz spozed he carried her heart



HE WUZ PAYIN' ATTENTION TO
LOPHEMIA KIPP

with him. It wuz known he carried her picture, took standin', with a smile on the pretty lips and a happy glow in the eyes, roused up

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it wuz spozed by young Jim himself. He went with her to the photographer's; that wuz known, too. Miss Kipp had boasted a sight about him, his good looks and his good business and his attentions to Lophemia till Nelt come.

Sister Kipp hain't megum, she is one of the too enthusiastick ones whose motto is not "Love me little love me long," but "Love me a immense quantity in a short time." It stands to reason that if the stream is over rapid the pond will run out sooner; if the stream meanders slow and stiddy, it will last longer.

Well, 'tennyrate she wuz all took up with Nelt Chawgo, and praisin' him up as she had to the very skies you may imagin my feelin's when one day she fairly bust into my settin'-room, out of breath and red in the face, and sez: "I've discovered the dretfulest thing! the awfulest, the most harrowin'! Nelt Chawgo, that young he-hussy, shall never enter my doors agin!"

"Whyee!" sez I, "what's the matter?"

Sez she, "He's a lost young man, a ruined feller!"

"Whyee!" sez I agin, and I sunk right down

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in my tracts in a rockin'-chair, she havin' sunken down in one opposite; and sez I, "I hain't mistrusted it. He has acted modest and moral; I can't believe it!"

"But it is so," sez she. "He has been ruined. Angerose Wilds, a dashin' young woman up in the town of Lyme, is responsible."

"I have hearn of her," sez I. "She had quite a lot of money left her, and is cuttin' a great swath."

"Well," sez sister Kipp, "she has deceived and ruined Nelt Chawgo, and then deserted him; it has all been proved out, and he shall never speak to Lophemia agin, the miserable outcaster!"

Well, I wuz dumbfounded and horror-struck like all the rest of Jonesville, but I, as my way is, made inquiries and investigations into the matter. And the next time I see Miss Kipp, and she begun to me awful about Nelt, runnin' him down all to nort, I sez to her, "I have found out some things that makes me feel more lenitent towards Nelson Chawgo."

Oh, how she glared at me. "Lenitent!" sez she, "I'd talk about lenity to that villian, that low ruined creeter!"

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"Well," sez I, "I have inquired and found out that Angerose Wilds jest follered Nelt up with attentions and flatteries, and it is spozed up in Lyme that he wuz tempted and fell under a promise of marriage." And I spoke with considerable indignation about this woman who wuz beautiful and rich and holdin' her head high.

But Miss Kipp treated it light and sez: "Oh, young wimmen must sow their wild oats, and then they most always settle down and make the best of wives."

But agin I mentioned extenuatin' circumstances. Sez I, "Miss Wilds wuz noble and galliant in her bearin'; she wuz rich and handsome, and she turned his thoughtless head with her flatteries, and won his pure and unsophisticated heart, so it wuz like wax or putty in her designin' hands, and then at the last she turned her back on him and wouldn't have nothin' to say to him." But these mitigatin', extenuatin' circumstances didn't mitigate or extenuate a mite with Miss Kipp.

Sez she bitterly, "Couldn't he have repulsed her attentions? Couldn't he have kep' his manly modesty if he had been a mind to? Wuz

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there any need of his fallin' to the depths of infamy he sunk to? No, he is lost, he is ruined!" sez she.

Sez I, "Sister Kipp, don't talk so scornfully; don't say ruined," sez I. "Fall is a good word to use in such a case; folks can fall and git up agin—mebby he will. But ruined is a big word and a hard one; it don't carry any hope with it; it breathes of despair, agony and eternal loss."

"Well," sez she, "it ort to in his case. I shall draw my skirts away from him and go by on the other side. Before his ruin he wuz a sweet, lovely young man, but now he is lost. I shall have nothin' to do with him, nor Lophemia shan't."

But I still tried to draw her attention to the facts I had promulgated that Miss Wilds, too, wuz not guiltless. But she wuz sot and wouldn't yield.

She said his sect wuz considered stronger-minded than our sect, with heftier brains and mightier wills, and so it stood to reason that if he wuz tempted by one of the weaker and more feather-brained, he could have saved himself and her, too, from ruin.

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There wuz some sense in her talk, I had to admit that there wuz. But I kep' on wavin' my mantilly of charity as high as I could, hopin' that some of the folds, even if it wuzn't nothin' but the end of the tabs, might sort o' shadder Nelt a little, for he wuz indeed a object of pity.

And we couldn't none of us look ahead and see the thrillin' eppisode that wuz in front on him. No, a thick veil of despair seemed to hang down in front on him. And I didn't mistrust that it wuz my hands that wuz goin' to push that veil aside and let some rays lighten up the darkness. But more of that anon and bimeby.

When the news got out about Nelt Chawgo, Jonesville society wuz rent to its very twain. The two factions led on by Miss Kipp and Nelt's friends waged a fearful warfare, some jinin' one side and some the other.

Some on 'em, the old conservative ones, wuz for overlookin' the hull matter so fur as Nelt wuz concerned and throwin' the hull blame onto the female woman up to Lyme on the safe old ground, trod so long by the world at large, that he wuz a man and so such sin in

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him wuzn't a sin. It wuz sin in a woman, a deep and hopeless sin that forever barred the guilty one from the pail of respectable society.

But I held to the firm belief that if she carried the pail he ort to, and visey versey. My idee wuz that they ort to carry the pail between 'em. They said it wuz sin in the woman, a turrible and hopeless sin, but in him it wuzn't. It come under the head of wild oats, which when planted thick in youth and springin' up rank, prepared the ground for a rich after crop of moral graces.

This wuz old well-established doctrine that had been follered for years and years, so they felt it wuz safe.

But one night to a church sociable when Miss Kipp had brung the subject up and one of our foremost deacons, Deacon Henzy, wuz advancin' these idees, she that wuz Nancy Butterick, who had come to Jonesville to deliver a lecture in the interests of the W. C. T. U., she sassed Deacon Henzy right back and sez she:

"The idee of thinkin' that the same sin when committed by a man and a woman ort to be laid entirely onto the party that is in the law classed



" SHE SASSSED DEACON HENZY "

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with lunaticks and idiots." Sez she, "That hain't good logic. If a woman is a fool she hadn't ort to be expected to have her brain tapped and run wisdom and morality, and if she is a lunatick she might be expected to cut up and act."

She wuz educated high, Nancy wuz, and knew a sight in the first place, as folks have to, to amount to much, for all education can do anyway is to sharpen the tools that folks use to hew their way through the wilderness of life.

Sez she, "The male sect is in the eyes of the Law the gardeens of females, and ort to act like gardeens to 'em and try to curb their folly and wickedness and restrain it instead of takin' advantage of it, and fallin' victims to their weakness." Sez she, "When a oak tree falls it falls heavier than a creepin' vine, a creepin' up and hangin' to it, and it would be jest as sensible to lay the hull of the blame on the creeper for the fall of the oak, as to put the hull of the blame on the Lyme woman."

Why, she brung up lots of simelys that fairly bristled with eloquence, and Deacon Henzy sassed her back in his way of thinkin'; it wuz a sight to hear 'em talkin' pro and con. But

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to resoom forwards a little. Miss Kipp and her crew acted rabbidder and rabbidder than ever. She jest tossted her head and drewed her dress-skirts clost when she passed him on the other side of the street, and she said she "would no more use a pinch of his tea or sugar than she would use pizen."

As for Lophemia everybody spozed she wuz glad to go back to Jim Carter with her Ma's full consent. When her mother come out so decided she jest jined right in with her and the majority, and seemed to enjoy it the best that ever wuz, turnin' her cold shoulders, cold as ice-suckles, on that poor fallen boy.

Poor Nelt! poor Nelson Chawgo! he wuz indeed tastin' the dead ashes of the fruit of Sodom he had eat with such a light heart. I thought when I looked at him of the Mountain Mourner, and he made me think, too, of Alonzo and Melissa, and that picture in the "Children of the Abbey," where the swoonin' heroine lays over the arm of Lord Mortimer like a dish cloth over a fork, perfectly insensible, and sayin' in the low and holler axents of despair, "Home! alas I have no home!"

Poor Nelt! he, too, wuz layin' like a wilted

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cabbage-leaf over the sharp-p'inted fork of Public Opinion. He, too, could say in the hol-ler axents of despair, "Alas, I have no home in the hearts or the good opinions of anybody or anything since my fall!"

As the days rolled by he grew wanner and still more wan as dozens and dozens of fingers of scorn wuz p'inted at him, and you could read in his pale and gloomy face that he wuz feelin' all the agonies of them who are scorned and betrayed.

Why, even my Josiah drew away his pantaloons as he passed him as if in fear that he might be contaminated by the touch of his overcoat. And I wuz afraid and said so, that he might be driv deeper into sin by their upbraidin' actions, and I could see that what the doctors said wuz true, that he wuz goin' into a decline through remorse and melancholy and blighted affection.

Poor Nelt! poor boy! As everybody turned agin him, in spite of his wickedness, I seemed to pity him more and more. And one night as I went to Jonesville and see him walkin' on the street, pale as a piece of white cotton sheet, I thought to myself I didn't envy the feelin's of

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the woman who had brung him down to where he wuz brung. He wuz walkin' along as meachin' as I ever see anyone, and I've seen lots of meachin' in my days. Yes, I see the scorn of the world wuz layin' on him so heavy it would crush him if sunthin' wuzn't done and done quick, too. Remorse and shame wuz doin' their work on the damask cheek of that once pure and beautiful young man, and I knew gallopin' consumption would soon carry him off, unless sunthin' wuz done immediatly to stop the gallopin'.

Well, it happened the very next day. Josiah asked me if I didn't want to go up to Lyme for a ride. He said he'd got to see a man about some lumber for a new hen-house, and as it wuz a pleasant day, I said I'd jest as soon go as not, and I would stop and see she that wuz Jane Ann Bentley, while he went on to see the lumber man, so it wuz agreed.

Jane Ann met me with a warmth; she wuz fryin' nut-cakes and makin' jell, and her face glowed with affection and perspiration as I went in. She escorted me into the settin'-room, took my things and went out in a hurry, sayin' she would be back in a few minutes. There

A MALE MAGDALENE

wuz a handsome young woman settin' there, croshayin' a child's sack with pink woosted.

Well, Jane Ann bein' so dretful glad and excited at seein' me walk in so onexpected, and her cakes bein' on the very p'int of burnin', and the jell jest beginnin' to sozzle over onto the hot stove, forgot to introduce me to her visitor. But I never believin' in folks settin' like clothespins when they meet in respectable housen, commenced talkin' quite agreeable about the weather and etcetery. And pretty soon Jane Ann come in tired but happy, and as she used to live in Jonesville, after we had talked about our mutual enjoyments of healths, and so forth, she inquired clost and minutely about all the news there, and before I thought on't, it bein' on my mind so, havin' seen him the night before, I broke right out and sez:

“There is one piece of news I can tell you that is melancholy enough to break a feelin' heart; you remember that handsome Nelt Chawgo, that he-belle that everyone thought so much on when you lived there; he has been betrayed and deserted by a heartless and designin' woman, and is goin' into a decline, I believe.”

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I thought Jane Ann looked queer, but I went on and sez: "Oh, if that woman could look and see the wreck she has made of that once happy and good young man, it must be she would be struck with remorse. They say she is handsome and well off, and holds her head high, while her victim is dyin' under the contempt and scorn of the world. Nobody will associate with him. Why, my Josiah draws his pantaloons away from him for fear of the contamination of his touch. He's weighed down under the scorn of the world and his own remorse. He is ruined in his bizness, and he's goin' into the gallopin' consumption as fast as he can gallop."

Jane Ann gin me such a queer look here that I involuntary follered her gaze and looked at the handsome stranger. Her work had fell into her lap, her face wuz red as blood, and she busted into tears, sayin:

"I am Angerose Wilds! I am the guilty wretch that wuz the means of that sweet and innocent young creature's fall; I am the one to blame. But," sez she with her streamin' eyes lifted to mine, "I never realized until you brung it before me the extent of my crime, but

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I will atone for the evil as fur as I can. I will marry him and so do all I can to lift him up and make an honest man of him, and set him right in the eyes of the community. And," sez she, while the tears chased each other down her cheeks, "Poor Nelt! poor boy! how you have suffered; and I alone am the guilty cause!"

But here I interferred agin, held up by Justice and Duty. "Don't say, mom, that you alone are to blame; divide it into two bundles of guilt, take one on your own back and pack the other onto hisen. It hain't fair for one to bear it alone, male or female."

Josiah come that very minute and I had to bid them a hasty adoo. But the last words that galliant appearin' handsome woman whispered to me wuz: "I will make an honest man of him; I will marry him."

And if you'll believe it, she did. It all ended first rate, almost like a real novel story. It seems that woman wuz so smut with remorse when it wuz brought before her in a eloquent and forcible manner; and she realized the almost irreparable wrong she had committed against that lovely and innocent young man, she

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offered him the only reparation in her power; she offered him honorable marriage, which he accepted gladly, and they got married the next week, and he brought her to Jonesville the followin' Monday, and they sot up housekeepin' in a handsome two-story-and-a-half house, and are doin' well and bid fair to make a respectable couple.

We buy the most of our groceries there; not all, for I am megum in groceries as well as in everything else. I buy some of the other grocer, not bein' willin' to hurt his feelin's, his wife bein' a member of the same meetin'-house. But Miss Kipp can't be megum any more than my own dear pardner can. She come 'round im-megiate and unanimous, and said their marriage made 'em both all that could be desired. She buys all her groceries of him; she sez his tea is cheaper and takes a spunful less in a drawin'. But I don't believe it; I believe she steeps it longer. 'Tennyrate she bought of him all her fruit and candy and stuff for Lophemia Carter's weddin', which took place some time ago.

Well, this party I sot out to tell you about wuz to celebrate the first anniversary of the

A MALE MAGDALENE

Chawgo and Wilds weddin', and wuz a joyful event.

After we got home Josiah wuz so nerved up (part on't wuz the strong coffee), that I had to read three truthful articles out of the scrap-book; he a settin' leanin back in his chair a listenin' and a makin' comments on each one on 'em as I finished readin' 'em.

His talk bein' some like the little pieces they play between songs, interludes, I believe they call 'em, only his talk wuzn't all the time melodious; no, indeed; fur from it. There wuz minor cords in it, and discords, and flats and sharps, yes indeed!

CHAPTER XXV

"A White Dream"

"As for thee, thy thoughts come into thy mind upon thy bed what shall come to pass thereafter."

"And I said: Who are these which are arrayed in white robes—And he said: The lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them and shall lead them to living fountains of water."

A CHRISTIAN woman, a member of the Methodist church, had two daughters, Marion, a young lady, and Nora, a sweet little girl of about nine years of age.

One night, both of her daughters being in their usual health, the mother fell asleep and dreamed.

She saw in her dream her daughter Marion, slowly approaching her from a long, long distance, coming back to her from what seemed an almost endless journey.

But little Nora stood far off, and yet it

"A WHITE DREAM"

seemed near to her, in a white, radiant place, clothed in snowy, luminous garments. The mother could not get to her darling; there seemed to be some impassable barrier between them. No power of love or longing could bring little Nora nearer to the longing mother heart, watching her from far off.

A short time after this the two daughters were stricken down with scarlet fever and for days and days it wuz thought impossible that either of them could live.

But after a long, long time Marion began slowly to retrace her steps from the gates of death, and came back to earth-life once more.

But sweet little Nora remained in the white home of the dear departed, the beautiful place He prepared for the lambs of the flock.

"Most probable," sez Josiah, "that mother had eat sunthin' white over night; white meat of chicken, or white beans or sunthin. Or mebbly she'd been' cuttin' out white cloth, or lookin' at snow mebbly. You can always account for white dreams in a reasonable way if you're a minter, or blue ones, or purple, or any color. I had a green dream the other night."

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"I don't doubt that," sez I, dryly.

"Yes, it wuz a real green dream, green as grass. I know what made that; I'd been lookin' at goslings that day. I see she that wuz sister Submit Tewksbury feedin' her's.

"I always trace back my different colored dreams onto what colored 'em. I jest stand up on filosofy and reason every time. I won't give in to no nonsense like visions or anything like that."

"But why did this mother dream that she saw her daughter Marion, coming back to her from so fur off?"

"Oh, mebb'y she'd sent her on some errent through the day to borry some tea, or the flat-irons or sunthin', and she had stood in the door watchin' her, and wuz in a hurry, and it seemed a dretful long time that she wuz gone. Girls dawdle so. You know how Tirzah Ann used to. You used to git real out of patience with her."

"But why did she see little Nora in the midst of that white radiance, near her, yet so fur away?"

"Oh, mebb'y she had been makin' her a white

Tirzah Ann



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frock or a bib apron, or sunthin', or mebbby—
mebbby—”

But I sot sail out of the room, into the but-
tery for a drink of water, and I don't know
what that last mebbby did lead to.

CHAPTER XXVI

For One Year

"Out of the depths have I cried unto the Lord."

"In the day of my trouble will I call upon thee, for thou wilt answer."

A VERY intelligent woman, a member of the Episcopal church, relates the following incident:

This lady, whom we will call Mrs. R., had an invalid sister whom she felt was her special care. This sister had lost her handsome property, her beautiful country seat, her carriages and horses, and most of the luxuries she had been accustomed to, and finally her health failed, and for ten years Mrs. R. had watched over her like a guardian angel.

She bought her a home, provided her with all her clothing, and for ten years not a week passed without her cooking a basket of dainties and sending it to her, was instant in season and out of season watching over her and

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guarding her. She bore her in her arms and her heart, and at any time would have preferred her sister's well-being to her own. Imagine her grief then when over the wires came flashing one day the heart-breaking message:

"Come quick, Kate is dying."

She went and found her almost dead; her eyes were sunken and set in her head, her nostrils were white and pinched, her fingers turned purple, she was entirely unconscious and had almost ceased breathing. The doctor said they could do nothing for her; she was dying.

Mrs. R. bent over her almost heart-broken and she prayed earnestly to her God, whom she loved and trusted, that He would give her sister back to her for a time—for just one year—she wouldn't ask more. And then as she saw her passing away from her so swiftly with no knowledge of her presence, she prayed that the Lord would give her back to her just to know her and speak to her.

This was in the afternoon. She watched over her all the rest of that day and night, she sitting on one side of the bed, the invalid husband on the other. Till along about day dawn they discovered a change in her; her hands

FOR ONE YEAR

turned a more natural color, the terrible gray shadow of death seemed to pass from her countenance, her eyes grew more natural and she looked up in Mrs. R.'s face and said:

"Jenny."

She knew her and only her. The Lord had heard her prayer and given her more than she had asked for. It seemed that in reward for her faithfulness He had given her back to her and to her only.

She did not know her husband; she had no knowledge of her later years. But she and Jenny were young girls again. They were hunting birds' nests in the woods; they were climbing up on the hay loft; they were going to school again hand in hand.

And for hours and for days this continued, knowing Mrs. R. and no one else; talking, asking questions, asking her if she remembered this and that incident of their childish days and young girlhood days; finally the time when they were young women. Then gradually she came back to the time when she met her husband, and she knew him. And so she slowly came back to life again and lived just one year, the year Mrs. R. prayed for.

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Sez Josiah: "I don't believe but what she would have lived anyway. I don't much believe that it wuz that prayer that saved her; it wuzn't loud, wuz it? She jest said it to herself?"

"The Lord is not deaf; the Bible expressly states this."

"Well, it sounds better to pray loud in meetin' or in openin' schools or anything. I don't much believe she wuz dyin'; most probable she wuz havin' some sort of a spavin."

"A spavin!" sez I coldly.

"Yes, a fit."

"Oh, you mean a spazzum. Well, it wuz no such thing; she had all the symptoms of death. There were several doctors present, and doctors can almost always tell about such things, Josiah Allen."

"Oh, dum the doctors! they're always makin' mistakes. They called my rumatiz a crick, and they doctored me for a crick you well remember, three weeks a runnin'. I don't pay much attention to what they say."

"Well, she had got so fur gone that she didn't know a thing."

"How do you know she didn't? Mebby she'd got tired of so much talkin' round her, and jest

FOR ONE YEAR

let on that she couldn't hear nothin'; I have pretended to be asleep lots of times jest to escape gabble, wimmen's gabble."

"Yes, Josiah Allen, I know you often do; when I have female visitors present you pretend to be asleep on the lounge in the room,



and you hear and enjoy every word we say."

"*Enjoy!*" sez he, with a real mean emphasis and a ironical one.

"Well, if you don't enjoy it why don't you go into the bedroom and lie down?"

"Because—because—the bedroom is to the north and the settin'-room is warmer."

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"That bedroom is so warm that we have to have the winder up."

"Yes, that's the reason I don't like to lay there, because the winder is up and it is resky."

"You couldn't shet it up, could you? Josiah, you tire me—you tire me out."

And I made him go and carry the milk to the calf. It wuz het, anyway.

But his talk didn't change my mind a speck.

"And they shall see His face."

This same lady, Mrs. R., relates that when her mother passed away (her father had died sometime before), Mrs. R. sat by her all night. The death-damp was on her face, her eyes were fixed in the icy unconsciousness of approaching death, the face immovably set and rigid. She was far past all consciousness or knowledge.

Suddenly, all at once her face lighted up with a radiant look. Her eyes saw something beautiful and surprising. She was almost past speech, but her lips moved. Those at the foot of the bed could not hear her, so low was her voice. But Mrs. R. bent over her and heard the faint whisper:

FOR ONE YEAR

“I—see—*Him*”

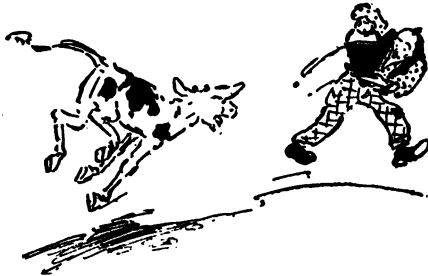
Then she sunk back and died.

Sez Josiah: “She wuz probable dreamin’.”

“She wuzn’t dreamin’. Didn’t Mrs. R. say that she looked right up and looked glad and happy when she said it?”

Josiah kinder tossted his head to one side and sez: “Oh well, when anybody is lyin’ they might jest as well tell a little bigger one; it seems she wuz the only one that heard her, anyway.”

And I sot demute; I wouldn’t multiply another word with him on the subject, not a word. There are times when it demeans you to do it.



CHAPTER XXVII

"Movin' a Meetin' House"

JOSIAH and I wuz invited to John Prindles'es, and went. They own a lovely place; it has been in the family for six or seven generations, every separate Prindle leavin' it lookin' a little better than the one precedin' him. It is a farm of five hundred or more acres, some of it smooth and level as a dooryard, and then anon some woods and some little rises of ground covered with maples and evergreens; and then some little valleys between, with a sparklin' brook runnin' under a rustic bridge. It wuz a fair seen—a fair seen. The family consist of Pa Prindle, John's father, also a John, and John Junior and wife, and their son John, double junior, as you may say, but they always called him Jack.

Well, ever sense the land had been bought from the Injuns—for some glass beads, for all I know, or some brass jewelry, and mebbly it wuz bought honest—but 'tennyrate ever sense

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that it had been owned by a John Prindle, and would keep on so, so it wuz spozed.

Though Pa Prindle, bein’ made fraxious by inflammatory rhumatiz and gout and things, sometimes used to tell Jack that if he displeased him it wuz in his power to leave the place to his next kin, a son of his only daughter, Hank Richards by name, and a mean creeter, so John Junior’s wife had always informed me, and I believe.

This Hank Richards had been partly brung up by Pa Prindle, and wuz now a builder of housen and doin’ fairly well, but a mean, deceitful creeter, tryin’ in every way to injure Jack in his grandfather’s eyes, and git hold of the property.

And what made it more curious wuz that Jack and Hank Richards had both fell in love with the same girl, sweet Violet Stone. It wuz spozed by John’s wife that Violet wuz in love with Jack deep, but owin’ to Hank’s deceitful, underhanded ways, she never felt at ease in the matter, for, as she said truly, “When snakes in the grass wuz a-wreathin’ round, and Pa’s wuz a-gittin’ childish, no knowin’ who or what they would git into their coils.”

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Such wuz the state of affairs when we made our visit to the Prindleses. So fur had John Junior's wife divulged to me in the stoop of the meetin'-house at the last conference.

Well, we journeyed along, travelin' for more'n half a mile through Pa Prindles'es land, when we come in sight of the house, and Albiny rushed out to meet us. It wuz a good big brick house, built by Pa Prindles'es great-grandfather, and improved upon by the follerin' generations. Why, Albiny's husband had put on a big bay-winder, besides fixin' the stoop beautiful on the west side, of which more anon and bimeby. They wuz so tickled to see us that we'd been there probable for two minutes or two and a half before I noticed anything strange in Albiny's face, and then I see the shadder, and I sez to her up in the front bedroom, where she had asked me to lay off my things, sez I, "Albiny, what is the matter? I see a change in you; what is it?"

And then she busted into tears and the story. And a-settin' there in them two arm-chairs, she and me, and I a-hearin' her tell it, I cried myself onto my new linen handkerchief in pure sympathy and madness, etc.

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Now, this west porch that I spoke on had been Pa Prindles’es ha’nt for forty years. He hadn’t been able to walk a step for that length



PA PRINDLE

of time. He had been a very active man before that, and when he had this terrible sickness that caused him to be shet up so long he wuz most broken-hearted after his sickness, and so

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downcasted, that the doctor thought he would go off into a decline. But the doctor, who wuz an old friend, knew jest what a lover of nater he wuz, and one pleasant day he persuaded him to be moved out onto the west porch—jest think on't, he a young man then—where the view was so enchantin' that it filled anybody's heart with delight, much more one who had been shet up within four walls for so long.

For he could see over the green stretch of the meadow, clear down into the village, bordered part of the way by droopin' maples and ellums; and then comin' out agin into the sun by the blacksmith-shop, and then runnin down to the store and school-house, and then way beyond that, round Balcom's hill, milds away, he could see the blue lake and the white sails a-comin' out and disappearin' round the p'int. And on stormy days he could set there sheltered and see the whitecaps breakin' ag'inst the green sides, and nigher the villagers under their umbrells a-goin' in and out to mill and to meetin'.

Folks have got to have sunthin' to love, and some pursuit to foller after. And bein' shet up, with nothin' else to take up his mind, Pa Prindle got to lovin' that seen as patriots love their

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native land or sailors love the sea. He got so intimate with it that it took gradual the place in his heart that ambition and usefulness had held. It wuz trully his all in all. Albiny said that the Methodist meetin’-house that they all belonged to had to be moved, owin’ to trouble with the deed. And what should the trustees do, led on by Hank Richards, but move that buildin’ right onto the place that cut off Pa Prindles’es view. The man that did the job wuz Adonirum Stone, Violet’s father. And he seemed to be completely under the influence of Hank Richards. Adonirum Stone wuz a builder, too, and Hank Richards wuz his pardner, and he favored Hank through the lies and deceptions practised on by him, and partly through obstinacy. He wuz as obstinate as any old meat-ax, and jest about as dull. Violet took her sweet traits and beauty from her ma.

Well, when the buildin’ wuz moved onto that very spot (done a-purpose, so Albiny said, by that serpent) John and Jack both went to old Stone and begged him to move it jest a little, to let Pa Prindle have his old view. Mr. Stone wuz one of the head ones in the church, and when they talked to him about it he acted as

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if he would make the change, and they come away hopeful, and the old man brightened up. The grief that this move of their'n caused him had made him bed-sick.

But the next day, after talkin' to Hank about it, old Stone wouldn't hear a word to movin' it. "What lies that serpent told him," sez Albiny, "I don't know. But 'tennyrate they wouldn't move it a inch, and there it is a-blockin' up that old man's view, cuttin' off all the joy he had, and the old man that furious and onhappy that he vowed no grandchild of his should ever marry the daughter of a man who had made his life wretched; and if Jack married that girl he would leave the property all to Hank Richards." Jest the move that serpent had worked for, so Albiny said. And Pa Prindle wuz jest as obstinate as old Stone, and between both of them old men the happiness of Violet and Jack wuz bein' trompled on and lost.

I set still a minute, and then I sez: "Albiny, why don't you go over yourself and see that man?"

"I have," sez she. "I went right over. I felt I would do anything to keep Jack from bein' miserable, and Pa Prindle, too. I feel

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dretful for pa. But of course a mother is a mother, and you can’t see your only child goin’ round pale as a cloth and not make a move to help him, and to help pa, too,” sez she; “for that old man is dyin’ by inches.”

“Well,” sez I, anxiously, “did he yield any?”

“Yield!” sez she. “Why, you might as well talk about a granite rock yieldin’; he skairt me most to death, he got so furious. Hank had jest worked him right up to think we wuz tryin’ to rule him and boss him round. The last words he yelled to me,” sez Albiny, “as I come down the door-steps, wuz: ‘You can’t boss me, and I’ll let you know you can’t.’”

Sez Albiny, “That seems to be all old Stone has on his mind; everybody has their weak spots, and that’s his’n, and that serpent has worked on it. He seems to like Jack jest as well as ever, and don’t have no hardness ag’instant us, but jest stands upon that one weak p’int, ‘bossin’.’ He won’t move that house one inch for fear of weakly yieldin’ his obstinate old will and bein’ bossed. He might as well hate us all,” sez Albiny, cryin’ onto her handkerchief, “as to stand where he duz, for Pa Prindle vows by all that is good and great that no

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grandson and namesake of his shall ever marry
the daughter of a man who has ruined all his



"YOU CAN'T BOSS ME!"

happiness. So there it is; if Jack don't marry Violet, he will lose all of the joy of life, and if he duz marry her that serpiente will git his way and the Prindle place, for Pa is a man of his word, as everybody knows."

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“Then,” sez I, “that meetin’-house is all that stands in the way? Everything would be smooth if it wuzn’t for that?”

“Why,” sez Albiny, “it is jest as bad as if a impassable gulf divided ’em, for neither of ’em will budge a inch from their word.”

I sithed, and sez I, “Curious that a meetin’-house, which should bring peace and good-will, should bring such trials and tribulations. But,” sez I, immediatly, “it hain’t the fault of the meetin’-house. That is innocent as an infant babe.”

And then I sot demute; I leaned my head on my hand for a minute in deep thought, and then sez:

“Albiny, did you eppisode any to old Stone in your talk?”

And she admitted that she didn’t, bein’ skairt out by his fiery acts and jesters, and sez she, “Do you think that that would do any good?”

“Well,” sez I, in a guarded way, “eppisodin’ will melt some men, and some it will harden. But in the cause of duty *I* will tackle him, if you say so, and try what eppisodin’ will do to him.”

“Well,” sez she, “so do, and if you could

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melt him down the blessin's of a wretched family would foller you for life."

So after dinner, a good one, but partook of in gloom, I put on my bunnet, but didn't put anything round me, only my long green braize veil that fell gracefully down one side of my light lilock gingham dress, and clad in this simple but tasteful costume I sot out leanin' on the arm of Duty and also on my umbrell.

I found it wuzn't fur off, and wuz a good-lookin', small, cream-colored house with green blinds and piazza covered with ivy. Violet opened the door, and I read in her sweet face the tale of sorrer. She seemed quite tickled to see me; Jack had brung her over durin' the summer; and I put my arms round her and tried to infuse into the tender kiss I gin her some hope as well as oceans and oceans of love.

Well, I asked to see her pa, and she ushered me into a settin'-room where he sot before a desk writin'. He met me considerable polite, and in reply to my roundabout talk I could see that Albiny wuz in the right on't; he seemed to like Prindles'es folks, and didn't seem to have a single objection to Violet's and Jack's union. But the minute I mentioned "meetin'-house"

“MOVIN’ A MEETIN’ HOUSE”

iron seemed to stiffen his mean. He looked as obstinate and hard as his own surname; his linement showed as plain as his words his invincible determination not to be “bossed.” Then, pursuant to my plan, I immediately branched out into eppisodin’. I eppisoded fluent and eloquent for the time I considered sufficient to impress and change.

But in vain. Iron firmness still marked his linement; I made no more impression on him by my eloquent metaphors than if I had lavished ’em ag’inst my old iron crane in the back kitchen. And then thinkses I to myself, for I know the limitations of human nater, “Here is a man that eppisodin’ won’t touch, metaphors are lost on him, eloquence drops off’n him like floods of summer rain on the eaves of our horse-barn.” Thinkses I, “Mebby reason will touch him, and common sense.” I then immediately proceeded to flood him with reasonable suggestions and words of deep common sense. In vain; my weapons, sharp and strong, fell harmless on him, and touched him no more than if they had been fine needles tryin to pierce a rhinoceros’s hide. I wuz at my wit’s end. I swet voyalent and prespired, I’d worked so

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hard. And thinkses I, "But one weapon remains; I will try him on sympathy."

"Bein' we are all in the family, for I am related to 'em," sez I, "do you realize what on-happiness you are bringin' to your daughter and Jack Prindle?"

"I am doin' nothin' of the kind," sez he; "I gin my consent to their marriage months ago, and I have not changed any."

And then I proceeded to whet the last weapon I wuz a-usin', the strong weapon of sympathy, and sez I, "You know how poor Pa Prindle feels about it—about that meetin'-house standin' where it duz."

"Well," sez he, "we have been permitted by the grace of God to preserve the tabernacle we lifted up to the glory of God."

"But," sez I, "the tabernacle no need to have stood on that very inch of ground, and so take away all the happiness of a poor sick old man."

Sez he, "That old man instead of tryin' to boss his neighbors round, and settin' such store by carnal things, had better be preparin' for a view of the New Jerusalem."

Sez I, "Id'no as the view Pa Prindle loves so well is any more carnal than the New Jerusalem."

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Sez he, coldly, cold as a icesuckle, “I call that blasphemy, Josiah Allen’s wife.”

“I don’t,” sez I, firmly. “New Jerusalem is proper in its proper place, and so is the view down toward the New road. The same Lord made ’em both for different spears of life, and Id’no but one is as innocent as the other, so fur as innocence is concerned.”

“I call that downright arneky,” spoke up the hired girl, who had come in and wuz wipin’ up the hearth. She wuz ignorant of rhetoric; she knew more about dish-cloths than prosedy. But old Stone told her to “shet up,” so consequently she shet, and walked out flouncin’.

And then havin’ put the finest edge I could on that weapon I wuz handlin’, I la’nched it at him, and sez I, “That old man hain’t walked a step for over forty years; all the happiness of his life has been to set there and look off down that long road into the village. He couldn’t git around and visit his friends, but he seemed to still be with ’em in a way, as he see ’em come and go along that highway to their bizness or pleasure.”

Sez I: “He has seen weddin’s and funerals go along that road. He has seen the maples

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and the droopin' ellums grow pa'e green in May, put on their thick velvet green robes in summer, and their gorgeous fall suits. He has seen the grass grow green by the wayside, the little rivulet cross the road and run down through the fields to hide in the woods. And way off over Balcomb's hill, at the fur end of the view, milds away, he has seen the sun settin' in a sea of glory, and sink down gradual into the shinin' lake below. And sometimes in the mornin' when the lake wuz blue and smooth, a white sail would dawn like a distant speck of white, and then grow and grow until it grew to be a sail and a boat, and then that would float off behind the green-wooded hill. He has jest lived on that view; it has been to him what society, business and recreation have been to you and all healthy men, and I say to shut off that sight is a shame and disgrace."

"But," sez he, obstinate and sot as any old rock, "it is no wicked view that obstructs him; it is a meetin'-house; it is religion," sez he.

Sez I, mad as a hen, "All the religion that went into puttin' that meetin'-house there you could put into a head of a pin, and have room left," sez I, "plenty of room."

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“I should be afraid to talk in that way,” said old Stone.

“I should be afraid to talk in that way about meetin’-housen,” said Hank Richards, who had come in unbeknown.

And I turned me round and looked at Hank



Richards; looked him full into his little shifty, restless eyes, and sez I:

“*You* are the one that ort to be afraid—afraid that the lightnin’ out of heaven would strike that buildin’ that is sot up where it is, to make an old man sorrow, and a mass of strife and wretchedness,” sez I, glancin’ at Violet’s white cheeks.

Well, I see my talk did no good, and so I al-

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most immediatly withdrew. There it wuz, Hank and wickedness had triumphed. A old man wuz dyin' and homesick for his own land, for truly he had lived in that realm of beauty for forty years. Jack wuz despairin', and Violet's tender heart wuz broke right in two, like one of her own namesakes after a heavy foot had crushed down on it. John Junior and his wife wuz full and runnin' over with pain and anger and pity and tenderness and everything.

And Pa Prindle sez to me "There is no way out of my onhappiness, for old Stone is as sot as a granite rock, and can't be moved."

And John's wife sez, "There is no way out of it, for pa will not give a cent of property to Jack if he marries Violet, and the dear old place will have to go into the hands of one I detest," sez she, cryin'.

"There is no way out of it," sez Jack's sad eyes, each one of which wuz a deep, dark well in which hope and joy had been drowned.

"There is no way out of it," sez Violet's white cheeks and droopin' figger.

"No, there is no way out of it," sez John's wife to me for the twenty-first or twenty-second time.

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And I sez, “Mebby there is,” speakin’ to keep her courage up, but not seein’ myself a ray of light on the subject.

Sez she, “There hain’t no way unless it would be by a mericle, and the days of mericles is past,” sez she.

“How do you know they’re past?” sez I, still speakin’ to keep her courage up. “Id’no as they’re passed; the Bible don’t say so.”

Sez she, “Josiah Allen’s wife, do you think anything could happen to smooth out this awful trouble?”

“Why, yes,” sez I; “why not? It is easier than movin’ a mountain.”

And as I said that word the miracle wuz brought right in front of Albiny Prindle, and she never mistrusted it. Swift, noiseless, with folded wings that never made the least sound or rustle, the messenger come and halted right behind my ear, and whispered into it. I hearn it, and in a minute the white, swift-footed messenger wuz gone—gone on his rounds to some other sorrowin’, broke-up household, mebby. Id’no how, or where, nor Josiah don’t. But havin’ the message gin me, like Paul, I wuz not disobedient to the vision.

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That evenin' along about dusk, while Al-biny wuz out a-wrestlin' with her hired help over a question of buckwheat cakes or rolls for breakfast, I bagoned Jack and his pa out to one side (my Josiah wuz a-tryin to talk to Pa Prindle, and not gittin' him started on any other subject only the Book of Job), I bagoned 'em out onto that deserted stoop, and sez I, "Do you believe the Bible?"

"Yes," says they both.

Sez I, "Do you believe the passage where it sez, 'If you have faith enough you could move a mountain?'"

And John sez, "I hain't faith enough," and Jack said so, too.

Sez I, "If the mountain wuz on rollers do you spoze you have got faith enough to h'ist it along a little?"

Jack looked thoughtful for a minute, and then his eyes brightened up. "What do you mean?" sez he, movin' forward quick and ketchin' holt of my hand.

Sez I, "If that house wuz moved back ten feet, that same old view would be there for your father's delight, and for all your happinesses," sez I, lookin' full at Jack.

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And sez I, comin’ out plain, “Why not hunch that meetin’-house back a little. If your faith is weak, depend on the rollers.”

For I didn’t know, of course, how strong their faith wuz, but I knew the power of the rollers. Sez John, “They are to be took out before light to move a house in Shackville.”

Then sez I, lookin’ up into the sky, “The moon will be right to cast the shadders of the woods onto the meetin’-house about twelve p. to-night. To try your faith,” sez I, and also the rollers.”

Before I had got the last words hardly out of my mouth Jack give my hand such a wrench that he almost crushed the little finger of my right hand—it pained me exceedingly for an hour—and John said, “Heaven bless you, Josiah Allen’s wife!” and hurried away to disseminate the news to Albiny.

And when approached by her, bathed in joyful tears, I made this solemn warning: “Secrecy as of the grave must cover this night’s transaction, Albiny Prindle.”

Yes, *I*, Josiah Allen’s wife, who had always gloried in my openness of spirit and conduct, sez them words. But new experiences truly

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require new conditions of the soul to meet 'em. Sometimes we turn over pages in our own life-history that we never mistrusted wuz there—pages full of words in a strange language that we have got to put on new spectacles to read. Such is life.

Well, I will set up a screen, pasted on one side with these strange characters, and on the other side with this one word, "Secrecy," writ on a sombry, dark background; I will set up that screen between the doin's of that night and the augience that is now a-lookin' on. No, you needn't try to peek round that screen; you can't see nothin' if you do; teetotle secrecy wrops the proceedin's of that eventful night; no one see or heard anything. The rollers wuz took out by the hurried movers of the meetin'-house, and nobody wuz the wiser or the onwiser for what wuz done that night; not till there wuz another little Jack on the old Prindle place, a glorified little Jack that drawed the hearts of the two obstinate old grandfathers together by the strong magic of love; not till then wuz the screen lifted, no harm a-follerin'."

But to resoom backwards. The next evenin', so deep into strange ways will secret conspir-

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acies lead one—but this wuz a good cause, an my conscience justified itself after a parley—*I*, Josiah Allen’s wife, the champion of frankness and plain speakin’, I myself led the conversation with Pa Prindle gradually away from Job and his sufferin’s, and so on, to Daniel, and sez I, “Did you ever think how when he stood by the deep waters the Angel of Comfort come to him, and,” sez I, “don’t you believe when we stand by the deep waters of grief and trouble to-day the bright angels of Consolation come to us?”

Sez he, groanin’, “I wish they would move that meetin’-house.”

Sez I, “Pa Prindle, come out onto the porch with me.”

“No,” sez he, “I can’t. I can’t look onto blankness and onhappiness where I’ve lived on beauty and comfort for forty years.”

Sez I, “To please me, Pa Prindle, will you come out?”

He trusts me implicitly; mebby it’s my intrinsic worth, and then agin mebby it’s his mind a-weakenin’ gradual. But anyway, after a brief argument I led him forth triumphant. John and his wife wuz there, with joy writ on their faces.

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John drew forward his father's old easy willer arm-chair, and he sunk down in it, and when at last he turned his eyes toward the old road of his delight the joy and wonder that blazed up into that old man's face won't never be reflected there agin till the gate opens and he gits his first look of the Continuing City.

Well, we dassent tell him the hull truth; we dassent, for fear he would tell on't, and I guess, though he never talked about it—he wuz a clost-mouthed man—I guess he took it as a mericle, and so it wuz in a way.

Well, that first night wuz too full of wonder and amaze for calm Happiness to have a chance to swing herself right out. But the next night at sunset, as Pa Prindle and I sot there side by side, the old saint full of gratitude to God and man, we looked fur off down the west. Balcomb's hill wuz aglow with light; soft shadders lay stretched underneath the hill, meltin' away in the glowin' radiance of the sunset on the water. A white sail wuz comin' round the p'int, and sailin' into that wake of glory. Over the lake piles of red and gold clouds wus heaped up in a gorgeous profusion meltin' upwards into a pale, clear, greenish yeller, and that soft-

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enin’ way in the deep blue overhead. High up the silver horn of the moon stood motionless, or so it seemed, over Balcomb’s hill. A tall ever-green higher than its mates stood part in front of it. Down in the west, where the gold light lay in long waves, one big star wuz shinin’. The New road lay stretched out in its beauty. Fur off the lights of the village begun to twinkle, sort o’ happy and sort o’ lonesome, jest about as lonesome a feelin’ as you enjoy sometimes when you are so happy that if you don’t have some other feelin’ to kinder set it off you don’t know how happy you be. Nigher by the maples and droopin’ ellums hung over the road, once in a while breakin’ up its long white line of light. And comin’ down that glorified vista into the New road of Delight, like Adam and Eve a-enterin’ Paradise, right toward us, hand in hand, come Jack and Violet.

CHAPTER XXVIII

A Strange Story

"After that he appeared in another form to two of them as they walked and went into the country—and He vanished out of their sight."

"And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord."

"Whereupon I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision."

THE wife of an eminent Bishop related the following incident which took place when her husband was a lad.

He had always been an unusually good boy with high ideals of life and earnest purpose. But he had not yet consecrated his life to his Master.

One day as nightfall approached he was walking in the streets of a great city when suddenly he saw coming toward him a man (if it be lawful to call him thus), with a pale face and large penetrating eyes.

The boy's breathless attention was drawn

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towards this stranger, so different did he look and appear from anyone he had ever seen.

He came swiftly toward him with a peculiar gliding movement, and as he passed the boy these words were borne toward him rather than said to him:

“My child, give me thine heart.”

When he turned his head to look, the stranger had disappeared.

The boy's heart was thrilled and he walked on like one in a dream. He did not speak of this to anyone, but a few weeks afterward as he was out walking again he heard steps behind him and again this same being passed him, and as before these same words seemed to float back to him, heard not only by the usual avenues of sound, but by all his awakened senses, by his heart and soul:

“My son, give me thy heart.”

Again like Festus under the preaching of Paul, the lad trembled. But he did not seem yet ready to consecrate his whole life to his Master.

Some time afterward in the dusk of the early evening, as he was walking amidst the busy crowd on Broadway, suddenly this stranger

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was at his side and as he passed he put something in the lad's hand, and as before when the boy turned to look for him he was not there.

By the last rays of western light the boy opened the slip of paper and read:

"My child, give me thy heart."

The boy's heart was melted. He was near old St. Mark's church and he went in and knelt at the altar and vowed himself a servant of the Lord from henceforth. And a life of peculiar richness and consecration and usefulness have proved the sincerity of his vow, a proof of his high calling.

Sez Josiah: "That's a queer story, Samantha. I don't believe a word on't."

Sez I: "I would take that minister's word and his wife's word jest as quick as I would take the word of the 'Postles."

"Oh well, I spoze they did mean to tell the truth, but don't you believe that wuz a human male man that met him, Samantha?"

Sez I with a good deal of dignity: "There are occasions, Josiah, when it is honorable to come right out and say you don't really know what to think, and this is one of 'em.

A STRANGE STORY

“Thackeray wuz asked once if Becky Sharp wuz a bad woman, and he said he didn’t know.



HE SAID HE'D MADE HER WHAT SHE WUZ

Said it when she wuz his own creation and he'd made her what she wuz. And I presoom he told the truth.”

“Sometimes so many avenoos of thought and

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possibility open out before you on every side you git to wanderin' round in them branchin' pathways, all on 'em pretty straight and smooth ones, till you git kinder lost and don't really know where you are, or which path to take to lead you out into the open sunshine of positive knowledge.

"Somebody sez, 'Truth is at the bottom of a well.' But I know that sometimes she is on top, runnin' along in front of you, so kinder swift-footed and elusive that she keeps ahead on you when you try your very best to overtake her.

"Sometimes," sez I dreamily, "her white luminous garment seems so nigh to you floatin' on ahead that you most know you can ketch holt of the hem on't. But when you stretch out your hand longin'ly she turns about and floats down, or up another shinin' pathway paved with plausibility and roofed with reason, and you have to take another fresh start after her."

Sez Josiah, "I believe it wuz a man; I don't think it wuz a angel."

And I sez, "I hain't prepared to take my positive oath what I do think. Only I do know that the ones that told this story told every word on't jest as it took place."

A STRANGE STORY

Sez Josiah, "I believe it wuz some circuit preacher that had been ridin' on his circuit and had got tired of ridin' and got off and walked afoot a spell, and he see this boy and liked his looks and so kinder hollered out to him. Or else it wuz some walkin' delegate out on a walk, or a man walkin' for a prize tryin' to git a gait onto him. Or else it wuz some exhauster goin' somewhere to carry on a meetin', or some Band of Hope Man, or a Salvation Army soldier. Or some advertiser, tryin to advertise some new meetin'-house. Or some crazy man wild as a loon walkin' round tryin' to skair folks. Or else it wuz imagination; the boy imagined it all."

Sez I, "Well, which one of these explanations do you favor, Josiah?"

"Oh, any one on 'em; they're all crackin' good ones; I kinder favor all on 'em," sez he.

And I sez in a dry axent, "I thought as much."

CHAPTER XXIX

The Everlasting Arms

"Floods shall not drown thee."

"When thou passeth through the waters I will be with thee and they shall not overflow thee."

A VERY intelligent and spiritual lady, widow of a clergyman, told me the following incident:

Soon after her husband's death she was visiting a relative with her two little fatherless children.

One day little Carroll, about two years of age, was missed. They did not know where he could be.

Just at this time a neighbor came in from the street. She had to pass through several rooms which must have taken her some time before she reached the room where Carroll's mother was, and her first words were:

"Where is Carroll? I thought I heard something in the cistern."

Of course they got there soon as they could,

THE EVERLASTING ARMS

but this had all taken some time, long enough for the child to have sunk a dozen times, and no one knew how long he had been in the water. But that infant was floating, held up by some infinite power. What else could have upheld the child there in that icy water at almost a freezing temperature and five feet deep?

There was no man near. The space was partly filled with a large hollow log to convey the water, even if there had been a ladder near that they could put down in the water they were not strong enough to lift out that great log pipe. They put down a cistern pole, but could give little help with that.

But Carroll's mother was perfectly calm, the calmness of those who fully believe in the divine promise, "The Lord is my refuge and my fortress, in Him will I trust;" and "A thousand shall fall at thy right hand and it shall not come nigh thee."

The child never cried, but there he remained on top of the water.

Some men two blocks away heard their cries for help and came. The child remained on the surface of the water until the men got to the spot, then he sank. As it seemed to make it

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easier to save him, for they lifted out the large pipe and one of them went down into the cistern and lifted the child out and handed him up unfrightened and unharmed to his mother.

Sez Josiah, "I believe that child had learnt to swim; I believe he wuz a first rate swimmer."

"At two years old!" sez I. "That seems likely!"

"Yes, two years old," sez Josiah, "or two months. I have seen ducks swim that wuzn't a week old."

"Ducks are different from children; they wuz made to swim, that's their element. Nobody ever hearn of a child swimmin' till it wuz learnt to swim."

"Well, there has always got to be a first time. Mebby if children had to swim younger they could."

"You know, Josiah Allen, that no baby of two years could be dropped into ice cold water and could swim in it and not cry and be frightened, and not sink, and don't you tell me you believe it," sez I.

I looked decided and firm. He see he couldn't dissemble with me, and he sez:

THE EVERLASTING ARMS

“Who knows but what some one wuz down in the water a-holdin’ him up? Some of the neighbors, mebby, a fixin’ the pump log.”

“Yes,” sez I, “that looks reasonable, don’t



DUCKS ARE DIFFERENT FROM CHILDREN

it? Bein’ there under the water in November. What do you spoze they’d be doin’ it for?”

“Oh, to be neighborly, mebby.”

Sez I firmly, “Take that lobbered milk, Josiah Allen, and carry it out to the hens.”

I felt as if I couldn’t hear another word. And he took the warm milk and started out.

But I didn’t feel half so riz up as I had about it, so contagious and melancholy is the atmosphere that wrops some folks’es souls, and when you git into their presence that cold deprestin’ mantilly of onbelief they wear waves out from ’em and flops over you, do the best you can.

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You try to ontangle the folds from your bod-dist waist of faith and upliftin' hope, but you might jest as well try to tackle the cold clingin' fingers of a thick mist that sometimes rises on a wet mornin' and blots out the sun, and strikes chill to your very marrows.

No, you can't change folks'es soul-atmospheres anyway. No city dressmaker or tailor ever made such tight fits or such lastin' ones.

Nothin' can disperse a heavy fog but the warm sunshine. And oh dear me! how wearin' it is to try to make a sun of yourself to shine down and dissipate the cold depressin' atmosphere of onbelief and scepticism.

I'd ruther wash any day.



CHAPTER XXX

Partheny's Ambition

I PROPOSED to Josiah that we should go and visit his cousin, Miss Ephrum Tucker. It wuz quite a distance there, but we wuz owin' 'em a visit, and I told him we could take the old mair and democrat and go well as not, and to my surprise he fell in to once with the idee.

Sez he, "It is genteel to take carriage trips; we will go, Samantha."

So I begun to make preparations. But a few days after I hearn a great hammerin' behind the barn, and I went out to see what it wuz, and there wuz Josiah Allen fixin' a strange-lookin' frame on the "democrat" with a sort of floor on top of it, and a crazy-lookin' ladder leadin' up to the top. I looked at the thing and sez: "For the land's sakes! Josiah Allen, what are you makin'? Is it a hay-rack or is it a hearse?"

He stopped and sez proudly: "It is a tallow-hoe coach to take our carriage-trip in; I didn't



SEZ HE, "WE WILL GO, SAMANTHA."

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want you to see it till it wuz done; I meant to happify and surprise you. It is so stylish, Samantha. We set there on top and have such a view of the country as we pass along."

"How in the world do you expect to drive the mair from that eminence?" sez I skornfully.

"Oh, I shall piece out the lines; it is more stylish anyway to have red strips on the ends with tassels."

"Do you spoze, Josiah Allen, that I, with my rumatiz and my spells of dizziness, am goin' to climb up on top of that thing, to say nothin' of its breakin' down and killin' us?"

"Yes, indeed, Samantha; genteel folks, you know, work like dogs to be stylish; dance all night, ride horse-back headlong after a rabbit till they're most dead, and chase a ball round a forty-acre lot, and you ort to be willin', I think, to put up with some trouble for the sake of bein' fashionable."

"Well, I tell you once for all that never, never will I set foot on that concern, and if you go and see your relation on it you will go alone."

He nearly buried his face in his right hand, and looked as if he wuz weepin'. I wuz dretful sorry for him, but self-preservation is the first

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law, and I couldn't resk my two necks, mine and my beloved pardner's, so I held firm, and he and Ury histed the thing off, and at my advice fixed it into a hen-coop. It made a good coop.

Well, that evil averted, I went on with my preparations, and at last we sot out, he in a pepper-and-salt costoom, and I in a gray dress and bunnet, my green baize veil thrown gracefully back, and my black mantilly with tabs. Josiah wuz in good sperits after a' oncommon good breakfast. It wuz a beautiful mornin'; the sun shone bright on a bloomin' earth. There had been a rain over night, as if Nater had hearn of our trip and washed her face to meet us. And as the mair and "democrat" moved along through the pleasant tree-bordered road I gin a thought to that tallow-hoe, and wuz grateful to a kind Providence that had kep' us from evil. But as we riz the hill out of Jonesville Josiah reached under the seat and drew out our old dinner-horn and gin a few toots on it, kinder risin' on the notes and fallin', and I sez: "What is that for, Josiah Allen?"

Sez he, "I am soundin' the bugle; it is very stylish on tallow-hoes or carriage trips. I shall

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sound this bugle every time we enter or leave a hamlet."

I will pass over my efforts and eloquence, but suffice it to say the dinner-horn wuz left to she that wuz Submit Tewksbury's, she wonderin' to this day what under the sun we started with it for, and I, not bein' willin' to lie, puttin' her off when she asks about it. And with no further coincidences we arrove about noon to Miss Ephrum Tuckers'es. They wuz glad to see us, a-tuckerin' kind of gladness, and her smile wuz sickly though affectionate. I have gin such smiles myself. Partheny wuz doin' a big washin' for a neighbor, and Ephrum wuz workin' hard in his shop; they wuz both workin' beyend their strength, I could see, and Partheny's mind wuz all wrought up, bor-ryin' so much trouble about her girl for fear she wouldn't pass in her studies and git a diploma. Of course, Angenora couldn't help her Ma any for she wuz jest barricaded with books, and bein' weak in her lungs and most blind with night study, had to work harder. And Partheny wuz doin' up Reginald's white duck suit so's he could go to a yot race, and he bein' lame from a baseball hittin' him on his spinal

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column, couldn't only jest move; so he couldn't help his Pa any.

Ephrum wuz in good circumstances, but hain't now; he is a carpenter and has to work day and night almost to support his family, and

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Partheny takes in work and goes out washin' to help along, for she is dretful ambitious and bound that her children shall be educated better than the relations on either side, and have more accomplishments; and they naterally hatin' books like pizen it has made it tuff for her. She has made 'em draw and paint, though their pictures are enough to draw tears, they are so bad; and both of 'em learn music, though they hate it so that, take it with their miserable faces when playin', and their miserable music, is a mournful enjoyment to hear it. But I bore up under it well as I could and gin a few smiles, I guess, but queer ones.

Ephrum put a mortgage on the pleasant little farm he had worked and paid for, and sent Reginald to college, but bein' so onfaculized and hatin' study so he suffered dretfully all his college years, but come through alive with quite a knowledge of Greek and Latin, and baseball and golf, and boatin' and drinkin'. He drinks considerable, they say—learnt it with other fashionable doin's at college. And Partheny wuz so intent on scholastic trainin' she paid no attention to ethics or higeen; they both lie considerable, and hain't honest, so I've

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hearn, and awful onhealthy. Reginald has worked on the farm since he got through college. There wuz no other work he had any faculty for (he loved farmin'), and Parthyeny told me proudly that she had heard him holler to his oxen, when he wuz ploughin', in three different languages, and I sez: "Did the oxen seem to go any better for it?"

And she didn't like it, and wantin' to give me a hit, I guess, she sez: "Probable not; oxen wuz like some folks—they didn't appreciate college education as they ort to."

"I can't speak for oxen," sez I, "not knowin' ox language, but I believe in a college education, 'specially when folks must have it. Now John Allen, Cousin Alvira Allen's boy, had to have it. You remember Alvira had to whip him to hold him back from books when you wuz whippin' Reginald to make him study. John wuz bound and determined to have an education, and worked his way through college and preachin'-school, and I have sot under his preachin', proud and glad that he did. But you know that Reginald always hated books, and when a baby almost would ruther plant and hoe in his little garden than to eat. He wuz

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bound to be a farmer, and I always thought that I would have let him foller his own way."

"What, and let Cousin Alvira's boy go ahead of mine? No, indeed! not if I work my fingernails off."

"But," sez I, "farmin' is honorable, Partheny. It stands to reason that when God made the first man, and had the full range of professions to chuse from, He wouldn't have picked out farmin' for him if He hadn't considered it one of the best. It wuz some time after that He started preachers to goin', but farmers and preachers are both perfectly honorable, and, like poets, they are made. And I believe that Reginald would have been contented, and happy, and prosperous if he had had his heart's desire, and after a good, fair education directed toward agriculture had follered his chosen vocation."

"No, indeed!" sez Partheny agin, "Cousin Alvira's boy hain't a-goin' ahead of mine."

"Well," sez I mildly, "time will tell; the best mustard poultice won't draw unless you know how to apply it to the spot. But I feel bad, Partheny, to see Ephrum and you workin' so hard; a mortgage is a perfect vampire, drawin' the

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life's blood before it will leggo; but I spoze Reginald will help you pay it off now?"

But Partheny said that he couldn't help, for when he had any money to spare he had to go to golf clubs and yot races. Sez she proudly: "He got dretful expensive habits at college, but," sez she, lookin' at the droopin', spindlin' figger of her girl bendin' over her books, "it is Angenora I am worryin' most about."

And then she went on and told me her deep consumin' anxiety to have Angenora graduate at the seminary she wuz attendin' and git a diploma. She had been through the high school and had a very good education, or as good as she could git with her nateral make-up—she hated study so, and wuz bound from babyhood to be a dressmaker; she used to dress her dolls with that good taste and perfect fit that they wuz the talk of the neighborhood, and her Ma promised that she might learn the dressmaker's trade jest as soon as she got her diploma. But that diploma her Ma wuz bound that she should have or die in the attempt. But it looked dubersome about her gittin' it because her health had run down and her eyes failed, and she wuz most blind.

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You see, despisin' books naterally Angenora had had to bone down and study three times as hard as her cousin, Polly Pettitt, for Polly loved books to that extent she seemin'ly had to only look at her studies to have 'em by heart. She wuz made that way, and law nor gospel couldn't keep her from goin' through school, and college, and medical schools, and graduatin' as a doctor. From her baby days she wuz jest as bound on that as Angenora wuz to be a dressmaker, and kep' her dolls in a state of health that actually wuz wonderful to see with constant doses, and the aid of perfect higeen.

Polly Pettitt wuz obleeged to work her way through college by teachin' between times, but graduated with the highest honors of her class, and for a year had been settled as a doctor in a thrivin' Western town with a success that wuz phenomenal, gittin' rich fast, and, what wuz better, provin a perfect blessin' to mothers and children, whose diseases she made a specialty of. She wuz a credit and honor to the hull female race. I had hearn a sight about her and gloried in her career, and Ephrum's wife bein' own cousin to her Ma, wuz jest bound that her girl should go and do likewise, not reflectin'

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that Nater had gin her diploma to Polly at her birth that couldn't be took away, and wuz jest as sure to gather to it school and college degrees as the magnet is to attract steel—it had to be, and wuz a glory and honor to be so.

But in the case of Angenora it wuz different. Nater had gin her a different writin', jest as honorable as Polly's, but as another star, differin'. A dressmaker such as the world seldom sees wuz the prize Angenora held in her grasp, jest as honorable and useful as long as wimmen wear clothes, for the outside and inside both has to be 'tended to, Scripture provin' it as in the case of the platter. But Partheny couldn't understand, and wuz determined that her girl should foller success down the very same path Polly did. And so she wuz a-staggerin' along that way so glorious to Polly, so hard and painful to Angenora, gropin' and stumblin' along, almost blind, for one eye had gin out entirely and the other wuz failin' fast.

As I see the poor girl bent down over her book till her nose most touched it, with a strong pair of specs on, powerless to help her much, and knowin' that the gole wuz still distant and wouldn't do her much good after she reached

PARTHENY'S AMBITION

it, for she wuz a-goin' to leave it to once and glad to, I felt that it wuz my duty to remark to her Ma that it did seem too bad to see Angenora ruinin' her eyes and her health.

"Yes, but she must git her diploma," sez her Ma, "and she is backward in her geometry, and trigonometry, and Greek, and seven or eight more studies."

Sez I: "Trigonometry is honorable and desirable in lots of cases, and so is Latin and Greek, and the seven or eight more studies, but they hain't a-goin' to help Angenora in her life work of dressmakin' nigh so much as eyesight and health. If they both fail her what has she got left?"

"Her diploma!" sez Partheny, firmly. "She will have that if I live and she lives. After she passes in her studies then she can tend to her life work."

Sez I sadly, "I am afraid that she will pass sunthin' else, Partheny, besides her studies. I am afraid she will pass the road that leads to success, and future happiness, and usefulness."

"Well," sez her Ma, "she has got to git her diploma, anyway; I have jest slaved myself to death for it and for Reginald's education, and

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I can't be disappointed in this; she must have her diploma."

"Well," sez I, "most everybody has a gole in life, and they're all different."

I see that it wouldn't do any good to argy any more, and I hain't one to set out vi'let roots on the cook stove and expect 'em to grow and blossom. But I felt deprested and feared the worst. And my most melancholy fears wuz realized. Angenora did git her diploma, but I may as well tell the end of the matter. The very day she passed in her studies the doctor told her that one of her lungs wuz gone, and he had gin up all hopes of savin' her eyesight. Her Ma got her diploma framed, but Angenora's eyes wuz so bad that she couldn't see it. And she sets there to home coughin' and cryin', helpin' her Ma by knittin' some and parin' potatoes and such, but she is dretful irritable and onhappy, and frettin' all the time about her lost aim, and the dressmakin' that she wuz cut out for, and dear to her as her heart's blood.

Ephrum's wife duz the best she can, but her health is failin' too, and they say that Reginald is snappish and hateful because he has to help his Pa in the carpenter-shop, instead of farmin'

PARTHENY'S AMBITION

as he wanted to. The farm had to go on that mortgage.

And what makes it all the worse for Ephrum and Partheny, Reginald feels above 'em and looks down on 'em, and don't love to associate with 'em, his learnin' is so much higher than theirs. But I hearn that his Cousin John, who is dretful sorry for him, preached such a powerful and tender discourse at the college they both graduated from, that it melted Reginald's heart considerable, and he acted mellerer and less disagreeable to his parents for some time.

John wuz chose to preach that great annual sermon partly on account of his high learnin', for they say he can read the Scriptures in the original as well as any old Greek ever did, jest searchin' in them dead languages and livin' ones, too, hunting for truth, usin' his science and philosophy, and all his education as keys to onlock the great problem of existence, how to serve God and man in the very best way, and make the most and best of this life, lookin' off all the time on to the life that is the real one, the land that lies starward. And he wuz chose partly on account of his wonderful eloquence.

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He jest lifts folks right up by his sermons, and inspires 'em to do better. The Lord gin him his diploma and his call to preach, I hain't a doubt on't.

And I hearn that he and Polly Pettitt are engaged to be married. They hain't related to each other, only by marriage. And their aims in life bein' so much alike, and so high, I dare presoom to say they will make real agreeable pardners, and will be blessin's to the world at large.



CHAPTER XXXI

A Vision of the Evening

"Ye have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes, the signs and the great miracles."

"And the vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true."

A VERY unimaginitive and practical woman, a member of an orthodox church, and an earnest Christian, relates the following:

This woman, whom we will call Mrs. S., had charge of her little grandchild, her only daughter's only child. The mother had passed away when the little girl was an infant, and Mrs. S. had always had the care of her.

Her son-in-law was a doctor, and one night, when he was absent from home, the two retired at their usual hour. The little girl was lying in the same bed with her grandmother. She had been in bed for some time and was fast asleep.

Mrs. S., who retired later, had only been in

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bed for a short time, and had not been asleep, when she heard a slight rustling sound, and, turning her head in the direction of the sound, she saw standing by the bedside a beautiful figure clad in pure white; a white unlike anything she had ever seen, it was so luminous and glistening.

It stood motionless by the bedside with its eyes bent on the face of the little girl.

Mrs. S. could hardly believe her senses, and she turned her head away and closed her eyes, but could not refrain from looking again. And the figure still stood there in the same attitude, looking down pityingly, as it seemed, on the sleeping child.

Mrs. S. covered her head with the bedclothes, her heart beating with wonder and amazement. But when she uncovered her eyes and looked again, it still stood there. At last she saw it gradually melt away and disappear.

The heart of Mrs. S. was torn with anxiety and fear, for she imagined this was a warning that her little granddaughter was to be taken from her. It was not so, but a terrible grief and loss was approaching the child. Within one week from that night the child's father,

A VISION OF THE EVENING

dearly beloved by her, was stricken with heart disease, and died.

Sez Josiah: "I believe that woman drempt' it. You know when you git to sleep, you can dream of an angel jest as easy as you can of a canary bird or a cow."

"She had not been asleep. She nad only jest gone to bed, and had not begun to be sleepy even."

"How do you know?"

"Because she sez so."

"Sez so! Well, Ananias said so, but that didn't make it so."

"She is a perfectly truthful woman, a Christian woman, respected by all, and wouldn't tell a wrong story for love or money. Everybody that knows her will tell you so."

"Well, she imagined it. She probable see a nightgown hangin' up on a nail, or a night-cap, and thought it wuz an angel."

"Yes, a night-cap resembles an angel so much, no wonder she couldn't tell 'em apart; And a nightgown would probable be hangin' up on nothin' in front of the bed, and be lookin' down pityingly on the child—the sympathy of

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a nightgown, Josiah, must be sunthin' touchin' to look at. And why did the child's father die within a few days?"

"Oh, it jest happen'd so; you know things most always happen when they git to happenin'. I have always noticed that they did."

"But what was this rustlin' sound she hearn, that made her turn her head and look?"

"It wuz mice, Samantha! Of that I am sure



'IT WUZ MICE'

as I am of my own identity. Wimmen will always start up and act, if a mouse comes within a rod of 'em. That is because they are so fragile and their minds are so weak."

With a voyalent effort I kep' my tongue still. But my mind kep' on a-workin' powerful

CHAPTER XXXII

Brought Back

*"A bird of the air shall carry the voice
and that which hath wings shall tell the
matter."*

"I will be with him in trouble."

A METHODIST clergyman, a doctor of divinity, relates this incident which occurred in his early life:

He had but one little daughter, who was the joy of his life, the heart of his heart. She was subject to attacks of croup, but was otherwise healthy.

One morning he set off on a journey, leaving the little one well and happy. He had traveled all day toward his destination, when suddenly he felt that he must go back home. He struggled with the unseen presence that commanded his return. He mustered all his forces of reason and logic. He said to himself:

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“Here I am starting off on important business, have nearly reached my journey’s end. How more than foolish it would be to turn round and relinquish all the positive good that would undoubtedly come from my continuing my journey and attending to my plain business duties just for an impression as viewless and formless as the clouds that float over my head—in fact less so, for I can see their forms outlined against the blue sky. But as for this presentment I can not form any conjecture as to why I am to go home.”

So he fought against this impression—this powerful spiritual summons. But it was stronger than his logic, stronger than his worldly prudence, for he turned about and took the train for his home.

As he reached the home station in the morning a neighbor met him.

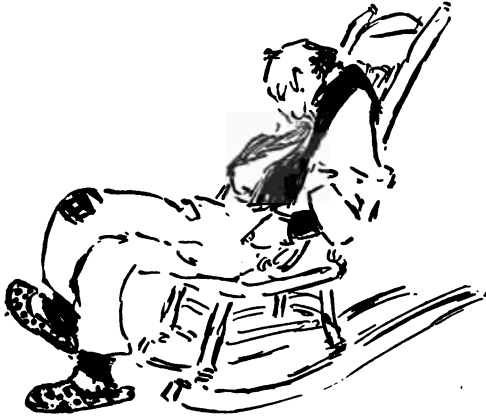
“Oh, how glad I am you have come! we have been trying to reach you with telegrams all night. Your little girl is dying.”

He reached home just in time to see the child and have her speak to him once more before she left him and the earth-life forever.

BROUGHT BACK

Sez Josiah: "I believe there wuzn't anything good in it; if anybody told that man it wuz the old Harry."

"It hain't the way as a general thing with the one I spoze you call the old Harry, to go 'round doin' good." And I added with con-



"WELL, I BELIEVE," SEZ JOSIAH, "THE MAN TOLD A STORY"

siderable politeness, "It would be more like the nateral nater of Harrison to have kep' him away."

"Well, I believe," sez Josiah, "the man told a story; I believe he had a letter gin to him on the sly by somebody. I believe he got one of the telegrams; I believe he turned 'round be-

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cause he wuz kinder lazy and got sick of workin'. I believe he wanted to git home, anyway. I shouldn't wonder if he had a crick in the back, or bilerous colic. I believe he got sick of the bizness he sot out on. I believe he was whiffin'."

"Can't you bring up another reason or two?" sez I. "It beats all what sights of reasons you can bring up; such powerful ones, too. That minister told the truth, every word on't, and you know it, too," sez I.

"I don't know nothin' about it nor I don't want to."

"Well, I thought so," sez I, and I added with dignity, "I would like a pail of fresh water, Josiah. I want a drink."

And he went out after it with alacrity and a ten-quart pail.

CHAPTER XXXIII

"Fishing by Moonlight"

"I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord."

"I have dreamed a dream and my spirit was troubled to know the dream."

A LADY, daughter of a clergyman, tells the following:

She said, after her father's death she had never been able to dream of him until one night years later, when her first child lay sleeping beside her, a tiny baby.

She saw or dreamed (though it seemed too vivid for a dream) that her father stood before her reaching out his hands as if mutely asking her for something.

She was so glad at seeing him that she gave no thought as to what he was reaching for, till at last he drew near her and gently and tenderly took the baby from her arms and folded it in his long robe and bore it away.

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About three weeks after this the infant sickened and died.

She never dreamed of him again till a long time after, when two little girls made music in her home.

Their house stood on the banks of a stream and one night she thought she saw her father standing on the opposite bank with his face toward her and his hands lifted toward heaven, as if in mute supplication and appeal; as if he were praying heaven to avert some terrible evil from her, or make her able to bear it.

Within one week after this both of these little girls were stricken down with diphtheria and died.

Since that time, though she is now an elderly woman, she has never seen or dreamed of her father again.

Sez Josiah: "I believe that feller by the creek wuz a fishin' and she see him out of the window."

"With his hands raised up to heaven! that's likely."

"Yes, with his hands raised up toward heaven. He'd ketched the hook in his ear; that

FISHING BY MOONLIGHT

wuz what ailed him, and he wuz tryin' to git it out."

"A fishin' in the middle of the night!" sez I, in a onbelievin' axent.

"By moonlight, yes; I've always wanted to fish by moonlight. I've always wanted to be romantick. But," sez he in a bitter tone, "you've always broke it up, always. She see him out of her winder, and bein' in the night she thought he looked like her father. She'd probable been thinkin' about him."

"Why did the children die the next week?"

"Well, I shall always think it wuz because the winder wuz open and they took cold. You can think as you're a minter, but that's what I shall ever believe."

"What about the first one that died, Josiah Allen?"



"I'VE ALWAYS WANTED
TO BE ROMANTICK"

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"Oh well," sez he, lookin' at the clock on the mantlery piece, "I would explain that all out to you jest as lucid and clear as this; only, unfortunately for you, I've got to carry home Bobbetts'es bags. He's goin' to have the threshers to-morry, and I've got to make arrangements to help."

"Yes," sez I, "I feel that is very unfortunate for me that you're so cramped for time. But it is generally the case. The seers and philosophers of the age stand mute before such marvels; they look on with awe. They feel almost like Moses, that they should put off their shoes from their feet because it is holy ground; They stand with reverence and wonder with their fingers on their lips—"

"Well, I shan't strip off my shues and ketch my death cold, and you can't make me; nor I shan't hold my lips down or run my fingers in my ears—"

"But I went right on and sez, "And you and men like you, who are able to tell all about it, and are seemin'ly willin' to, are so cramped for time that you can never fully explain these mysteries to us. And so the world must go on in ignorance while you handle bags and tend threshin' machines."

FISHING BY MOONLIGHT

“Yes,” sez Josiah, “that is jest how it is.”
And he put on his hat and went to the barn to
look up brother Bobbetts’es bags.

And I went out and built a bright fire in my
shinin’ kitchen stove and started a delicious
supper, so’s to have it all on the table good and
warm by the time he got back.





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